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Discussions

DISCUSSIONS

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USES AND RESULTS OF CHURCH HISTORY.¹

IN attempting to perform the duty required of me by the directors of the Seminary to-day, I do not propose to enter into any discussion of the general principles of theological education. The numerous discourses on occasions similar to this have accumulated a mass of traditionary remarks on this wide topic, to which I could hope to add nothing new or impressive. It will be sufficient to announce, in connection with the pledge which I give to-day, the great cardinal truths which shall ever guide my action as an instructor in this Seminary: that the first great requisite for the Christian minister is fervent piety; and that to cultivate this should be the chief aim of his training; that there is no royal road to mental improvement, but the faculties are only improved by honest and diligent labor; that the doctrines, government and mode of worship of the Presbyterian Church in the United States compose the wisest and most scriptural set of religious institutions known to us; that the sacred Scriptures possess plenary inspiration, and are infallible truth in every word; that to the dictates of these Scriptures, interpreted according to the fair and customary sense of human language, all philosophy, all speculations, and all inferences must implicitly bend; and that the Holy Spirit, to be obtained by constant prayer and holy living, is the only sufficient interpreter of God's word.

It would seem that the practical intention of the authorities of this institution, in requiring such a discourse as the present from their new professors, is this: that the Church may have some indication and warrant of the manner in which the instructors to whom she entrusts her interest intend to discharge their duties. She has called me, through the electors of this Seminary, to the task of training her candidates for the ministry in Ecce-

¹A discourse delivered at Dr. Dabney's Induction into the Professorship of Ecclesiastical History and Polity in Union Theological Seminary, Hampden-Sidney, Virginia, May 8, 1854.

siastical History and Polity. I propose to discuss, therefore, *the proper uses and results of the study of church history.*

The full attainment of those results require certain previous qualifications, in both teacher and pupils. The student must possess a competent knowledge of the outlines of secular history, geography, chronology, and political institutions, in all past ages; for these furnish the frame which encloses and sustains the picture of ecclesiastical history. And this knowledge should be acquired beforehand; otherwise he will make an imperfect progress. It is obvious that the instructor must possess this knowledge in a still higher degree. And it may be safely affirmed that there is no department of human study requiring wider or more profound knowledge, and a rarer union of varied talents, than are requisite for him who would be master of the science of history. The study of this science is no dull treadmill of names, dates, and events, as some seem still to imagine. It is based, indeed, on a multitude of *facts*; but it is concerned with all their causes and relations. For the mere verifying of these facts there must be a combination of extensive and accurate knowledge, with patience, impartiality, sound judgment, subtlety, and perpetual watchfulness against the blinding influences of prescription, habits, great names and prejudices. All the faculties which are requisite for eminence in judicial transactions are here called into play; for the historian must sit in judgment on a multitude of competing witnesses, and hold the balance of truth with an acute eye and steady hand. Nor can he seek his witnesses only among compilers and professed historians. He must ascend to the contemporary sources of information; he must know the literature and the spirit of the age he studies; he must gather notices of the true nature of events from every side, because statements or hints which are collateral or accidental are often, for that very reason, most impartial. The more rigidly he questions the original witnesses for himself, the more will he be convinced that those writers who have proposed to compile and digest the materials to his hand have discolored or misrepresented the true, living picture of events. De Quincey has said, "Two strong angels stand by the side of History as heraldic supporters: the angel of Research on the left hand, that must read millions of dusty parchments and of pages blotted with lies: the angel of Meditation on the right hand, that

must cleanse these lying records with fire, even as of old the draperies of Asbestos were cleansed, and must quicken them into regenerated life."

The teacher of church history will also have occasion for an ample knowledge of all the theories of philosophy which have influenced the world; for human speculations have ever had an intimate connection with doctrine, and a potent influence upon it for good or evil. The speculations of Plato and the dialectics of Aristotle infused elements into Christian theology which have affected every age, and are felt to this day in our modes of thought and the errors which beset us. But the Greek philosophies were but the progeny of earlier speculations, which were indulged in the remote antiquity of Persia and Egypt; and to know the daughters, we must know the parents. So that we are at once compelled to journey backward to meet the very earliest dawn of human science in that orient realm from which the human race first spread; and the expanding subject, at its successive steps, gathers into itself every addition which man has made to his philosophy, down to the present day. Indeed, the accomplished historian must use the audacious and yet sublime words of Bacon when he was preparing himself for revolutionizing science: "I have taken all knowledge to be my province."

And when the facts are thus verified and correctly comprehended by laborious research and cautious judgment, the materials are only prepared. While some of the deductions from them lie on the surface, and offer themselves necessarily to the most shallow investigation, the complete use of these materials demands the highest exertions of the faculties. The facts to be generalized are the most diverse and varied presented by any science. The problems offer the most numerous and complicated premises. Nothing short of the widest knowledge of human nature and the soundest political sagacity will protect from erroneous classifications and unsafe deductions.

But none can feel more strongly than myself that, in enforcing the high qualifications which church history requires for its study, I have been only illustrating my own deficiencies. If I should permit these remarks to be interpreted into a claim of these qualifications on my own part, it would be only a display of arrogance and conceit. "I count not myself to have apprehended." This model of the complete historian is not the start-

ing point, but the goal, to which the industrious labors of a life-time will perhaps only approximate.

Much is said in these latter days of the dignity and importance of the science of history. We often hear the phrase, "philosophy of history," and perhaps not seldom in the mouths of men who do not know what they mean by it. Many splendid things are prophesied of the fruitfulness and interest which history will attain when scientifically cultivated. And many scornful and contemptuous things are said as to the past results of this study. It would seem that the usual impression of educated men of this day is, that history is a mine, teeming with most numerous and precious gems, into which the mattock of the discoverer has but just penetrated; a field waving with rich fruits, which are yet to fill the bosom of the hardy reaper who shall enter it with the sheaves of fame and wisdom. Permit me formally to disavow all this boasting vaticination. It is as delusive as to the future, as it is unfair and depreciating towards the past. We will not be held responsible for the production of fruits from our historical studies, so much richer than all that has been gathered hitherto, as to justify these prognostications. To assert that historical knowledge has been hitherto comparatively barren and unfruitful betrays an unreflecting ignorance as to the true source of many of the most valuable principles now in the possession of the world, and even of those who complain. And the expectation of a speedy harvest, comparatively more abundant and valuable, betrays an equal amount of mistiness in their conceptions of the method by which that harvest is to be reaped. Far be it from us to intimate that there is to be no more progress and no new fruit. But we are only to expect it as the gradual result of pains-taking and long-continued labor. Nor do we deny that there is propriety in the idea of arranging history under the forms of an inductive science. The countless and diversified *facts* of history, like the phenomena of nature, may gradually be correctly classified, according to their resemblances and agreements. The general truths, indicated by a multitude of agreeing particulars, may be deduced. The sequence of classes of events on other classes may guide us to the relation of cause and effect between them. And these general truths and relations may become the grounds of a multitude of instructive and profitable inferences. What we assert is, that much of this has al-

ready been done, if not in technical form, in actual result, by the reflection of mankind and the labors of previous writers. We hope that much more of this will be done in future by the gradual labors of many hands. But we believe that the complete digesting of history into the shape of an inductive science, and the realizations of all these splendid anticipations of its professed admirers, will be beset with peculiar difficulties.

One of these difficulties is obvious in this remark : that among the *facts* of our science we shall find many things intangible and invisible to our inspection, if we take the phrase "facts of history" in that comprehensive sense which is necessary when we profess to make a safe and complete generalization from them. History is the record of the doings of the human race. But, in human affairs, passions, purposes, impulses, are acts, and secret motives are their causes. Many of the data necessary for complete deductions, therefore, are invisible to every eye, except that eye which can search the human heart. The secret operations of men's hearts are among the most important elements of human events, and our synthesis of those events cannot be complete, because our analysis cannot be complete, unless the annalist of the events could exercise the attribute of the Searcher of hearts.

Another difficulty will be found in the fact that the conditions of events which are externally similar are almost infinitely diverse, as they occur in the shifting pantomime of human life. A thousand influences, more or less direct, coöperate in ever varying strength and combination to produce results. There is perpetual risk of overlooking or mistaking some of the circumstances which attend the events we seek to arrange.

Nor are we certain that facts are correctly delivered to us, even so far as they were external and visible to those who profess to record them. Observation shows us that it is no small exploit of integrity and good sense, in the affairs of social life, to tell a thing just as it happened. And we know that, to have written many and large books, and to have much learning, is no warrant whatever for the possession of either integrity or good sense. A thousand misconceptions, prejudices, habits of thought, prevent the apprehension, and therefore the record, of events.

We never know that we see the true color and proportions of the past transactions reported to us ; we only know that we see

them as they appeared to the annalist through the medium of his own mind and heart. And at every stage in the stream of tradition we must expect to find additional misconceptions and errors infused. How can there be an accurate and reliable induction from facts which cannot all be accurately verified?

Nor is this obstacle all. Unfortunately, the records of the most essential facts no longer remain. Those things which are the most operative elements of social, national and religious welfare are just the things which historians have been least careful to record. The knowledge of them has, in many cases, perished away for ever from our search. In secular history, battles, sieges, coronations, conquests, treaties; and in ecclesiastical history, councils and their canons, controversies and anathemas, have been the favorite themes of the story. But the food which nations ate, the clothing they wore, their domestic life, the state of domestic discipline, their arts, agriculture and amusements, the method of their devotions, their superstitions, the hymns they sang, the preaching to which they listened, the books they most read, the color of the national and social passions, the peculiarities of the national spirit; all these every-day and homely influences are the causes which potentially form the character and compose that mighty current of the age on which kings, battles, conquests and conquerors are but the floating bubbles which indicate its motion. But all this historians have usually left to die with the passing time, as if it was unworthy of the dignity of their drama. And such is the perversity of this misconception, even to the present day, that there are not a few readers of Mr. Macaulay's *History of England* who pronounce his invaluable chapter on "The State of England," the third of his first volume, the great blemish of his work. But now, all that remains for the enlightened student of the past is, with bitter regrets for this blind neglect, to glean those scanty fragments of the precious materials which have floated down to us as the waifs of the stream of literature. What would be the hope of useful additions to medical science from the analysis of cases where the record, instead of carefully reciting the temperament and habits of the patient, the symptoms of the disease, the remedies applied and the issue, should occupy itself with an ambitious account of the alarm and excitement of the household, the messages which passed between them and the physician, the hour

at which the hurried messenger was dispatched, and the speed at which he rode ? It is nearly thus that the true causes, indications and remedies of the diseases of nations have been passed by, to record the external incidents of their catastrophe.

And at last, when all the facts which can be verified have been collected and arranged, the deducing of our conclusions is beset with difficulties. All the disturbing causes which can attend moral and political questions cluster around our deductions. The problems of history are just those which arouse all the prejudices of mankind, and relate to all their contested interests. The controversialist meets here the same *odium theologicum*, which would excite him in the polemic field, and the politician the same prejudices which would make him a partisan on the floor of a parliament. Unless we make ourselves almost more than human, we shall, each one, deduce those historical conclusions to which our interests and prejudices incline us, from the same set of premises.

And yet, no branch of history has been a fruitless study. There are broad and established facts which have been made the sources of most valuable deductions. The study has borne abundant fruits; and some of them are all-important to human happiness and progress. And while I would by no means convey the impression that it has reached its greatest cultivation and yielded all the results which are to be expected from it, I profess that, if I shall succeed in imparting to my pupils only those old and known lessons which church history has taught all along, I shall consider the course by no means useless.

In attempting to point out some specimens of the practicable results which have been derived from church history, or may be expected from it hereafter, permit me to suggest that we overlook the source of much of our most important knowledge derived from history, because of its very certainty and obviousness. These valuable lessons lie so upon the surface of past events, and when seen, are so evident, that all men pick them up, and they use them so habitually that they forget whence they came. And the educated man could not, perhaps, be made to apprehend how much of the furniture of his mind, and how many of his principles of action, were obtained from this source, unless the whole knowledge of past events were struck from his memory. Whence, for instance, does the statesman learn that power

must have definite limitations, to prevent its becoming despotic; that its tendency is to absorb other powers to its own centre? From the history of states. How do we know that republicanism is better than despotism? From history. How do we know that presbyterianism is more favorable to true Christianity than prelacy? How do we know that prelacy tends to beget arrogance in the higher and obsequiousness in the lower clergy? How do we learn that prelacy inclines to popery? How that heresy begets moral corruption, and moral corruption social ruin? All these are the obvious lessons of church history, not perhaps of history written in learned folios, but of the record of past events, written in the experience, the traditions or the books of the age. If we extend the definition of history a little, so as to embrace, not only those past events of which we learn from the testimony of others, but those also which have happened under our own limited observation, then the statement will be literally true, that to the lessons of history we owe all our experimental knowledge of human affairs.

And except that limited knowledge which our own observation conveys to us, we are indebted to the same source for all our acquaintance with human nature. There are two remarks to be made, which show the importance of that part of our knowledge of human nature and affairs which we receive from the past. If we knew nothing of the transactions of past ages, we should only know those phases of man's nature, and should only have an experimental acquaintance with those affairs which fall under our own limited observation. What a mere patch is this in the great field of life! He who knows but this, must be a man of most narrow mind. And again: that experience which comes from our own observation is only obtained in any completeness after the observation is finished; that is, after our race is run, and experience is too late to help us. It is the knowledge of the past which gives to the young man the experience of age. While yet he retains the energy and enterprise of youth, and it is not too late for action, history guides his activity with the prudence and wisdom of venerable infirmity. It is hers to unite the attributes of both seasons in one person. In private and personal affairs, the force of these observations may not be so distinctly illustrated, because the field is limited, the results of steps taken are near at hand, and the agent himself is the

person most concerned. Here the narrow but increasing experience of the young man, united with caution, may protect him from all ruinous errors. But public institutions or influences, whose operations are far-reaching, whose right conduct involves the welfare of many passive persons subject to them, should never be committed to any man who has not gained a wide experimental knowledge of similar institutions in all former times. The man who undertakes to teach, to legislate, or to govern, either in church or state, without historical wisdom, is a reckless tyro. His wicked folly is like that of the quack who should venture upon the responsibilities of the physician without having either seen or read practice. For, a series of human generations constitute but one lifetime of a political or ecclesiastical institution. The incidents of one human lifetime, or one era, constitute but a single "case," a single turn of the diseases of society. And no man has experience of those diseases who has not studied the symptoms and results through many generations.

In this connection no more is needed than to point briefly to the fact that the best arguments against bad institutions are drawn from their history. The readiest way to explode unreasonable pretensions is to display their origin. Such an auditory as this need only be reminded that the battle against popery in the Reformation was fought on scriptural and historical grounds. Many of the most mortal stabs which Luther gave to mischievous popish institutions were by simply telling the ignorant world where and when they arose. And when the two hosts were regularly marshalled for controversy, there speedily came forth that great work, the parent of Protestant church history, the *Magdeburg Centuries*. This work, which was little more than a digest of the annals of ecclesiastical events, proved a grand historical argument against popery, and its effects were so deeply felt that Rome put forth her utmost strength in opposition to it, in the annals of Cæsar Baronius. And now there is no better argument against popery than a simple history of its growth. There is no better confutation of the exclusive pretensions of episcopacy than a history of the English Reformation. Often there is no way so practical and so efficacious to disarm a modern heretic as to prove that his pretended improvements are substantially the same with the errors of some schismatic who

has been stamped with the reprobation of Christendom in ages long past. To affix just reprobation to a wicked thing is often its most effectual punishment.

In accordance with this, it will be found that there is no readier, and, we assert, no juster, mode to silence that shallow and arrogant theology which professes to enlighten the Calvinism of New England, than simply to expose, without debate as to its merits, its detested origin, as it may be found, even in its minutest lineaments, in the fragments of *Pelagius*, preserved among the works of Jerome and Augustine. Affix to it, as it may be justly done, this name, which has met the execrations of Christendom for thirteen hundred years, and it dies in merited shame and contempt. Let us show, as it may be truly and justly shown, that the rampant Arminianism which reviles our doctrines of grace in these commonwealths is exactly the semi-Pelagianism of the Jesuit Molina, which even Rome, with all her instinctive hatred of God's grace and truth, has never had the hardihood to adopt, and it will speedily diminish its arrogant front.

These illustrations suggest another most important result of historical studies. The most instructive and profitable way to study theology is to study the history of theological opinions. It has been often remarked that he who thoroughly knows past errors is best prepared to refute the errors of his own day. There is much less that is new in human speculations than is supposed. The assertion of the royal preacher may be applied to the current of human thought with as much justice as to any other subject: "The thing which hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, see, this is new? it hath been already of old time which was before us." Indeed, we are not surprised that this should be so, since God has impressed a general sameness upon the hearts and understandings of all the generations which produce these recurring opinions. The history of theology, therefore, is a complete arsenal, which furnishes us with all the weapons of discussion. There we shall find in regular array the arguments which were found most efficient to slay the heresiarchs of their day; and when the old enemies revive, it is our wisdom to grasp those same weapons and burnish them again; their temper has been tried.

But this is a familiar remark. It is perhaps more important still to point out the value of the history of opinions, in giving a fulness, maturity and symmetry to our theological knowledge, which he who studies dogmatic systems alone can never attain. The dry system only produces a pedant. The union of historical studies with systems makes the true scholar. The former prepares for the forensic defence of our faith the mere disputant, the chopper of logic; the latter equips the controversialist with practical, flexible, moderate wisdom. We have here a fact in the great business of education which deserves more leisurely and philosophic discussion. What I am able to say in its elucidation will be no more than a hasty hint or two. The difference between these two modes of study may be illustrated by the two methods of studying natural history, in cabinets of dried specimens or in the fields and woods. The former method gives a certain sort of knowledge of plants, trees and animals; yea, it is necessary. But how imperfect is that man's knowledge of nature who stops here! He must add to his system an acquaintance with the objects of nature as she presents them in the colors, shapes and attitudes of life. So, to know any speculative science, we must not only define and classify its dogmas; we must see them as they have shaped themselves in human minds, and examine them in the relations and aspects which they possessed by their origin. Indeed, I have always found a knowledge of the origin of a dogma, and of the creed and tendencies of the man who originated it, invaluable as a guide to its logical affinities and consequences. Relations and results, which furnish a complete test of the value or hurtfulness of the dogma, are suggested at a glance by the relations which it held in the parent system. But to trace out those affinities so successfully by original and independent speculation would have been a task most difficult, and often wholly baffling, to the clearest minds. Once more; by learning how other men have thought and reasoned, we obtain, without going from our studies, much of the benefit of foreign travel, and converse with great men of different nations. The mind expands and bursts the unconscious shackles of local prejudice and sectional modes of thought.

I may illustrate the importance of history as a school of experience by its warning and purifying effect upon the moral

judgments of men. It teaches us to beware of the estimate which the seductive brilliancy of present success might entice us to make of the doubtful acts of our cotemporaries, by pointing us to the end of similar acts and principles in others. In the tangled web of life we often see a crooked policy crowned with apparent success, specious but vicious principles of action applauded and leading to the goal of wealth or fame, and sturdy honesty branded with reproach or cold neglect for its opposition. Amidst the tumult of success and applause, the warning doubt is too often suppressed, conscience is silenced, and the unreflecting, unread multitude are seduced first into admiration, then into approval, and finally into imitation. But here, to the mind of the instructed man, history intervenes and forbids the heart to be depraved by the example of prosperous vice, or misled by the seeming success of dangerous measures. She lifts the veil of the past and unrolls similar scenes, showing not only the gaudy beginnings, but the gloomy end, to which these principles have conducted. It is hers to show us "the end from the beginning." It is hers to correct our judgments and reestablish our tottering rectitude, by setting before us the whole instead of a part, by leading us to contemplate not only the specious summer of prosperity which often shines for a time upon false principles, but also the winter of adversity, in which, in the righteous dispensation of providence, they finally issue.

There is an illustration among the essays of the popular historian already mentioned which is so apt to this remark that I must be permitted to apply it here. He is defending Sir J. Macintosh from the charge of fickleness in his judgments concerning the great Revolution in France. This philosopher, it seems, when he first beheld the splendid and liberal reforms of the early revolution, hailed it with admiration. When he saw it issue in the Reign of Terror, he repudiated the whole movement with abhorrence. But again, when he saw the firm, enlightened government of the consulate emerge from the sea of troubles, stripped of all the encumbering remnants of feudalism, securing liberty of conscience and domestic order, founding private rights on the just and liberal laws of the Napoleon Code, he returned partially to his first feeling of approval. This, says his eloquent defender, was not fickleness, but the natural and necessary consequence of what fell under his observation. He was like a

man who, travelling in some newly discovered island of the South, finds a tree loaded with productions of golden hue and seducing fragrance. He plucks and eats, and the taste is equal to the promise of its appearance. Thereupon he pronounces it a delicious fruit. But after a little he is moved with violent nausea, prostrated with weakness, and seems at the verge of death. He recovers at length, but now he retracts his judgment and pronounces the specious fruit to be a dangerous poison. But again, upon the more deliberate observation of the succeeding weeks, he discovers that his frame has an unwonted vigor, and is freed from chronic disorders which had long lurked in it. And now he again reconsiders his opinion, and comes to the final judgment that it is a potent but wholesome medicine.

Now, to this, the final and correct conclusion, history leads us. By pointing us to similar principles and actions in the past and their ultimate results, it protects us from confounding the errors and vices which are the true poison of society with its pleasant food, and the wholesome and necessary medicine with its poison. It teaches us to distrust the temporary and specious prosperity or gain which attends immorality and error, and tells us, with solemn and monitory voice, to remember, amidst all the clash of unthinking applause, that "the lip of truth shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment."

Permit me, for farther illustration, to call your attention to such a lesson of history presented by the records of the French Church. This lesson is to be found in the apostasy of Henry IV. from the Calvinistic to the popish religion. Many apologists have pleaded excuse, or even justification for this crime, by which he deliberately abjured an honored creed, received from the teachings of a sainted mother, and embraced the profession of a superstition which he secretly despised to the end of his life, in order to secure his crown. He found that the hostility of the League would be invincible as long as his protestantism afforded a pretext for it. Thus argue his advocates: "By this act he only surrendered his personal preferences for the good of his country and his posterity. Becoming a Catholic, he at once disarmed a faction otherwise implacable and invincible. He restored peace to a bleeding country, and averted the probable danger of its dismemberment. He transmitted a powerful and

glorious crown to generations of his heirs; and, above all, he secured to himself the ability to shield his former brethren, the bleeding Huguenots, from the ferocious bigotry of the papists, to whom, if he had blindly continued a Huguenot himself, they must have fallen a prey, in spite of his useless fidelity. By this compromise he enabled himself to establish the rights of conscience on the basis of the Edict of Nantes, and gave to Calvinism a long and prosperous career. Shall an act, so fruitful in immediate and extensive benefits, be branded as a crime?"

History casts her serene eye over the finished tragedy and answers unhesitatingly, "Yes; it was the crime of arraying the human against the divine wisdom, and of presuming to find some safer path to follow than the path of God's commandments."

What the destinies of France might have been, if this impious sacrifice to her peace had not been offered, we may not conjecture. What fate the righteous ruler of nations might have given them, if the Huguenots had separated themselves from every unholy alliance and odious conjunction, and had calmly drawn the sword with the resolve to conquer for themselves an honorable liberty, or else to die freemen; if they had said to each other with the sublime composure of faith, "Let us be of good courage and play the men for our people and the cities of our God, and the Lord do that which seemeth him good," we cannot tell. But we need not discuss the pleas which are urged to excuse the apostasy. We would willingly agree that no argument should be used but to pass the results of this act in grim review before the royal criminal himself, and let him decide whether those results were worth the sacrifice of his honor and his faith. It restored peace to France, but it consigned her to two centuries of despotism. It secured his throne to him for seventeen years; but they were years of toil and danger, disgraced by his licentiousness, and they conducted him only to a terrible and sudden death by the dagger of a frantic bigot. He gave the Huguenots indeed the Edict of Nantes, and with it ninety years of existence as a legalized sect; but it was an existence beset with uncertainties and alarms, harassed by perpetual encroachments, unworthy of a noble church, and degrading to its purity, and ending in banishment and remorseless persecution. He conciliated, indeed, the papal party, but conciliated them by submission, and left their rampant bigotry unwhipped of justice and untamed, to

crush out the light of freedom and truth in France, and plunge her into the gloom of priestcraft and superstition, and thereby into atheism and anarchy. He transmitted his crown to seven successors; but it was only that they might disgrace their ancestral name with every foul excess of tyranny, debauchery, and cruelty, and die by the hand of murder, or amidst the horrors of remorse and the neglect of their accomplices in crime. And one of these successors, perhaps the least guilty, closed his stormy reign upon the scaffold! And now, in the presence of that guillotine and that remorseless throng of anarchists, where the star of the house of Bourbon set in bloody night, let it be decided whether such a race, ending in such a catastrophe, was well purchased at the price of truth and right. Standing beside such retributions of ancient wrong, history lifts her voice with the severe majesty of a messenger from the throne of the Almighty Judge, to repeat the lesson, "Be sure your sin will find you out."

Whether in church or state, man's true political wisdom is only learned from experience; in other words, from history. This is the only source from which any safe light can be obtained as to the future workings of proposed opinions and institutions. The workings of the human heart and the relations of human society, are infinitely diversified. To foresee and meet, by original speculation, all the results which will be evolved by the contact of any set of institutions, or principles, with these diversified relations, would be the attribute of omniscience, and not of human wisdom. But there is much of this folly, at this day especially, among our would be wise men, who seem to think that institutions can be invented which shall run of themselves, like some improved carriage or locomotive, forgetting that their machine must meet diversities of positions and relations in its course of which they can foresee nothing. We have no respect for your constitution-makers, who, like the Abbé Sieyès, keep a warehouse full of institutions which they can furnish to customers at order. We repeat, there have been several instances shown to the world in which men of great speculative powers have undertaken to think out a body of institutions according to the pure dictates of their own wisdom. Such is the origin of Plato's republic, a system of government so absurdly impracticable that fortunately it has been impossi-

ble for any people even to attempt it. The great Locke also tried his hand at the work and made a form of government for the colony of North Carolina, which, to the cost of the people, was put in operation, and was found to be a most wretched one. We repeat the proposition with emphasis, that the only political wisdom which is worth having, is that of historical experience. And we repeat the reason, that the conditions under which any proposed new institution will have to act in the future will be endlessly diversified, and hence it is wholly beyond the province of human speculation to foresee by its own efforts all the numberless exigencies which may arise out of the workings of the institution upon these new relations. Man has no pole star and no compass, by which he may boldly break away from the track of experience and navigate the ocean of the future. The province of his wisdom is to follow the ways explored by previous voyagers, and only to venture into the uncertain storms of the untried so far as the light of the past is reflected forward upon it. All the safe and successful progress which has been made in human institutions has been from changes made under the guidance of history. The spirit of English reform has been eminently historical. Her statesmen have ever looked for the guidance of prescription; have retained all old and tried institutions with tenacity, and where they have altered have done it with strict regard to the lights of the past and the forms previously established. The same spirit marked the measures of the wise fathers of our nation. They took their lessons from the past. The liberty and the rights for which they contended were the prescriptive rights of British freemen. Even in passing from monarchy to republicanism, they removed nothing which was not incompatible, and built the new structure of their commonwealths upon the old historical foundations, which were fixed in the habits and national associations of their people. But we have an illustration of the other more ambitious wisdom and its ruinous results, in the policy of the leaders of the first revolution in France. These men discarded the lights of the past, because their past history was only hateful to them for its oppressions and disgraces, and their literary taste preferred to the sober voice of a Thucydides, Polybius, and Tacitus, a Moses and Ezra, the fantastic pictures of a Plutarch, and other speculators like him, who, though born the slaves and

living as the sycophants of despots, babbled about a liberty of which they knew nothing, and of which they were unworthy. The revolution announced its mission as one of destruction to the past, to its abuses, its principles, and even its recollections, and of new and independent creation for the future. They disdained the safe and gradual reform of institutions tried, and known because tried, but partially perverted. They swept all away; and proceeded to reconstruct on the basis of their own airy speculations. The very names of government were studiously changed. The old departments of France, whose boundaries had once marked the marches of independent kingdoms and languages, and were embalmed in the associations and very speech of the people, and in many cases defined by nature herself, were replaced by arbitrary rectangles which made France the resemblance of a chess-board. And the result was, that they found they had created a machine whose unexpected action smote down and crushed its inventors. They had unchained a maniac whom they knew no charm to tame. Their reforms only ran a career of self-destruction, and left France exhausted by anarchy, war, and new despotism, to begin again the work of renovation.

We shall be wise, therefore, if we hearken to the striking instruction of these instances, and make it our method to submit with modesty to the sober teachings of the past in all our legislation for the future.

Permit me to suggest another especial reason for giving prominence to the history of the church in our plans of education at this time. This reason is to be found in the neglect of such reading, and the ignorance of the potency of the religious element in public affairs, which prevail among our legislators. The time was when enlightened statesmen were aware of the fact that they, their measures and their institutions, were but the driftwood upon the great current of moral influences which pervade the nations, indicating its direction and power. They were aware that *religion* is the great mistress of these influences, for good or for evil. They studied religion and its institutions as the prime learning of the statesman, and counted the ability to avail themselves of religious elements the right arm of their strength. But these things are changed in this self confident generation. Men spring up into legislators and rulers from the

farm, the work-shop, the counter, or the bar, scarcely knowing that there are great religious questions of centuries' growth working in the very fibres of the hearts of nations. They put forth a rash hand to the springs of a nation's energies in ignorant unconsciousness of the tremendous powers with which they tamper. But a few years ago the legislators of this very commonwealth were on the verge of introducing into our laws, in a subtile but most mischievous form, the great principle of *mortmain*. Others of our commonwealths have already admitted it under limitations which are melting away with every generation. Did they know that this principle was the most fatal legacy of Constantine to the church of the Roman Empire; that when once admitted, it must inevitably shake off all control, and absorb every thing to itself by the very laws of the human heart: that it was this which corrupted, as it ever will corrupt, the Christian ministry, and made popery possible; that this principle had transferred one-third of the soil of France, and half of the soil of Denmark, Sweden and Scotland, at the Reformation, into the insatiable maw of ecclesiastical corporations, converting their clergy from the active ministers of a holy religion into the incubus of the state, the corrupters of public morals, and hordes of impostors, rakes and drunkards? No; they knew nothing about it. All unconscious of the inevitable mischief, they were about to do an act, as they supposed in the spirit of a commendable liberality, which would, in future ages, have marked their day as one of the blackest among the *dies nefasti* of Virginia. And now, what do we behold? Our politicians are seen "currying favor" with popish hierarchs, and bending their policy, even while sworn servants of the American constitution, to catch popish votes. Little are they aware, that in all this they are but dallying with the mighty paw of the Apocalyptic beast, which nurses a natural, a necessary, an immutable enmity to all that is distinctive in that constitution, and only "bides his time" to rend it and them in pieces. They know not that popery has been, ever since the Reformation, and must ever be, the embodiment of all the elements of hostility to human rights. They do not understand that the question between popery and Protestantism is everywhere the same with the question between despotism and civilized progress; and that, from the sixteenth century forth to the great millennial consummation, there is but the one mighty

issue to be tried on the arena of Christendom, and but the one plot which runs through all the remaining acts in the drama of European affairs, and that this issue is the one between the Bible and Rome. No. They do not know the history of the church. And hence the necessity that these great lessons of the past shall be everywhere studied, everywhere discussed. Hence the importance of expanding by them the minds of educated men in all professions.

The history of the church and of the world, regarded as a whole, is but the evolution of the eternal purpose of that God who "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Deep in the secrets of his own breast is hid the united plan, from which the pattern is gradually unfolded on the tangled web of human affairs. As that decree is one, so history is a unit. And as God gives no explanation of his purpose, except by its unfolding, the great whole cannot be fully understood until it is completed. Revelation gives us the key to unlock the meaning of many parts, and it has told us what is to be the final result. Hence we may derive two truths: one is, that no man but the believer is capable of understanding the philosophy of history. He who learns from the Scriptures, and he alone, can possibly understand the meaning of events or interpret them aright. Your infidel historian must needs blunder on in Egyptian midnight. The other is, that the science of history will only attain that philosophic completeness which some have desired and prophesied for it, after the course of human events is ended. We are now in the position of soldiers in some mighty host, moving in many detachments to effect the destined evolutions of a great commander who overlooks the whole field from a separate point. Wrapped in the smoke and dust of our own conflict, we comprehend little of the great design, and are pushed on in many movements of which we cannot guess the intention. Sometimes, perhaps, we imagine that we are bearing an undue share of dangers and hardships for no adequate purpose. Sometimes we complain that we are left in useless inactivity; and sometimes the lifting up of the battle cloud, or the distant huzza of our brethren in arms, reveals to us that a partial victory is won. But it is only after the field is fought, as we review it in the leisure of our triumph, that we will understand the complicated whole and appreciate the perfection of the plan.

There are parts of the great design which we are able to read in the unfoldings of Providence, and we learn from them that the elements are gradually conspiring to the final triumph, and that, subsidiary to the main movement, God is accomplishing many beneficent effects, and chastising nation after nation for apostasy or idolatry. Already we can see why it was that God did not permit Mohammedanism to overwhelm the Christianity of the East as long as it was worthy of preservation, and why he made the infidel invincible by all the efforts of popish Europe in the Crusades. It was that the Mohammedan power might be at hand to divert Rome from the murderous design of trampling out the life of Protestantism, and might thus act as the unconscious protector of God's cause. And it was that these fair and teeming regions of the East, the centres of ancient civilization and power, might be kept from the clutches of Romanism until Protestantism should be strong and adventurous enough to possess them. We can even now understand why Wolfe conquered before Quebec, and the fair domain of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi was transferred from France to England. This event substantially transferred the continent from Rome to Protestantism. There was a youth of fiery passions and energy in Hindostan in the last century who was once on the verge of suicide; but Providence diverted the design. He entered the military service of the infant East India Company, then struggling weakly against the superior arts and arms of France. Again he was on the verge of engaging in the war of the American Revolution, but by an accident was detained in India. These two providential incidents gave to India Lord Clive, the successful opposer of the French in Hindostan, the victor of Plassey, the founder of the splendid dominion of Britain in the East. And at the same time they detained out of America a man who, by replacing sloth and incapacity with genius and burning activity, might have turned the doubtful scale of war against us. Thus, then, did God probably decide that America should be independent and republican, and that the mighty East should fall under the control of a Protestant instead of a popish power. In all these instances we see that the means are gradually prepared to install Messiah as King of kings.

And again, there are stages in the drama at which a resting point is reached, and one part of the plan is as it were completed.

From such a stage we may look back and comprehend much of the preceding events. Such a point was the Christian era, pre-eminently, when all the results of four thousand years conspired to bring in that "fulness of time" which was needful for Christ's appearance, and all the moral influences of the civilized nations seemed to arrange themselves in a solemn pomp around Judea as the centre, the *omphalos* of the world.

Yet, when we comprehend these things, we only catch glimpses of the divine meaning. "These are parts of his ways, but the thunder of his power who can understand?" To comprehend fully the intent of the divine dealings, to read the vast plot from its inception to its consummation, this must be one of the studies of heaven. When we look back thence upon the field fought and won, when we have before us the finished whole, and above all, when we have the tuition of him into whose hand "all power in heaven and on earth is given," to explain to us the eternal plan, then we shall know fully what is the teaching of history.

And here, fathers and brethren, you will all assent that I have bestowed upon my science the most magnificent encomium which is possible, when I have said that the history of the church is one of the studies and enjoyments of heaven. But is it not true? Here, then, let me stop, only repeating the expression of unfeigned diffidence with which I assume a department of instruction demanding for its most successful treatment universal scholarship and a mind whose imperial powers unite the sagacity of the statesman with the epic vision of the poet. I am well aware that such an undertaking cannot fail to result in a life-long sense of deficiency. Let it be mine to feel this sense as a stimulus to the greater diligence. And above all, I would seek the guidance of him whom we expect to be our teacher in heaven to unfold the divine dealings. May my historic muse be that power invoked by Milton :

"And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all shrines the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me; for thou knowest. Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And madest it pregnant. What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

WHAT IS A CALL TO THE MINISTRY?

THE church has always held that none should preach the gospel but those who are called of God. The solid proof of this is not to be sought in those places of the Scripture where a special divine call was given to Old Testament prophets and priests, or to apostles, although such passages have been often thus misapplied. Among those misquoted texts should be reckoned Heb. v. 4, which the apostle there applies, not to ministers, but to priests, and especially Christ. The call of these peculiar classes was extraordinary and by special revelation, suited to those days of theophanies and inspiration. But those days have now ceased, and God governs his church exclusively by his providence, and the Holy Spirit applying the written Scriptures. Yet there is a general analogy between the call of a prophet or apostle and that of a gospel preacher, in that both are, in some form, from God, and both summon men to a ministry for God. The true proof that none now should preach but those called of God is rather to be found in such texts as Acts xx. 28, "Take heed . . . to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers"; 1 Cor. xii. 28, etc.; and in the obvious reason that the minister is God's ambassador, and the sovereign alone can appoint such an agent.

What, then, is the call to the gospel ministry? Before the answer to this question is attempted, let us protest against the vague, mystical and fanatical notions of a call which prevail in many minds, fostered, we are sorry to admit, by not a little unscriptural teaching from Christians. People seem to imagine that some voice is to be heard, or some impression to be felt, or some impulse to be given to the soul, they hardly know what or whence, which is to force the man into the ministry without rational or scriptural deliberation. And if this fantastic notion is not realized—as it is not like to be, except among those persons of feverish imagination who of all men have least business in the pulpit—the young Christian is encouraged to conclude that

he is exempt. Let the pious young man ask himself this plain question, Is there any other expression of God's will given to us except the Bible? Where else does God authorize us to look for information as to any duty? The call to the ministry, then, is to be found, like the call of every other duty, in the teachings of God's revealed word. The Holy Spirit has ceased to give direct revelations. He speaks to no rational adult now through any other medium than his word, applied by his gracious light to the understanding and conscience. To look for anything else from him is superstition. While the call of prophets and apostles was by *special revelation*, that of the gospel minister may be termed a *scriptural call*.

What, then, is a call to the gospel ministry? We answer, *it is an expression of the divine will that a man should preach the gospel*. To this another question succeeds, How does God now give a man that expression of his will? We answer, he does it thus: by enlightening and influencing the man's conscience and understanding, and those of his Christian brethren, to understand the Bible truths and the circumstances and qualifications in himself which reasonably point out preaching as his work. The full and certain call to the ministry is uttered by the Holy Spirit, both to the candidate himself and to the church. The medium of its utterance is God's dealing with the candidate and the principles of the written Scriptures. The object of these remarks will be secured by explaining the above definition in a series of particulars.

1. First, then, a call to preach is not complete until the Holy Spirit has uttered it, not only in the Christian judgment of the candidate himself, but in that of his brethren also. Their minds, taught of the Holy Ghost, and inspired by him with spiritual principles and affections, recognize in the candidate a "brother beloved," fitted by his spiritual gifts for the ministry, and their utterance of this judgment is a part of his vocation. Sometimes, as in the case of Knox, the brethren anticipate the candidate's own conclusion in uttering this call; usually they follow it by uttering it after he has acted so far on the probable evidence of a call found in his own Christian judgment as to prepare himself to preach. And it is manifest that the candidate must necessarily, in common cases, proceed so far as his preparation on the incomplete evidence he finds in himself,

greatly confirmed, indeed, by the advice of individual brethren, because the church cannot usually judge his probable call until he prepares himself.

2. The principles of Scripture which the Spirit will employ to instruct him and his brethren as to the divine will are such as these: That "it please God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," (1 Cor. i. 21; Rom. x. 14). That every man is bound to render to God the highest service and love which his circumstances and capacities admit, (Deut. vi. 5; Matt. xxii. 37). That "we are not our own, for we are bought with a price, and must therefore glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are his," (1 Cor. vi. 20; Rom. xiii. 1). That "whether therefore we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do all to the glory of God," (1 Cor. x. 31). That the work of him who is permitted to preach the gospel is of all others most excellent, (Titus iii. 1; Jas. v. 20; Dan. xii. 3). And that every Christian has been redeemed from his sin and death by the Saviour, for no other purpose than this, that he shall be that, and do that, by which he can best glorify his Lord, (Acts xxvi. 16; Eph. i. 6). These Scriptures, and a hundred others, plainly teach that the only condition of discipleship permitted by Christ to any believer is complete self-consecration to his service. In this the self-devotion of the minister is just the same as that of all other true Christians. If a Christian man proposes to be a teacher, physician, lawyer, mechanic, or farmer, it must be, not chiefly from promptings of the world or self, but chiefly because he verily believes he can, in that calling, best serve his heavenly Master. If he hath not this consecration, we do not say he is unfit for the ministry only, he is unfit to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. If any man think this standard of dedication too strict, let him understand at once that he is "not fit for the kingdom of God;" let him relinquish his delusive hope of salvation; let him at once go back among the dark company of Christ's enemies, on the ground scathed and riven by the lightnings of his wrath, and under the mountainous load of all his sins unatoned and unforgiven. There is no other condition of salvation. For did not Christ redeem the whole man? Did he not purchase with his blood all our powers, and our whole energies, if we are his disciples? We profess to desire to love him with our whole souls, and therefore what reason is there

which demands a part of the exertion and service in our power which does not also demand the whole? That professor of religion who contents himself with exerting for his Saviour a portion only of the efficiency for which his capacities enable him confesses himself a hypocrite. The *modicum* of religious effort which he renders is not truly rendered to Christ, but to self-righteousness, or to a guilty conscience, or to public opinion. Had the motives which exacted this partial service been genuine, they would assuredly have exacted the whole. Let every young Christian heed this solemn truth, and the question of the ministry will be relieved of its indistinctness; for then the question of the profession in which he shall serve God will be seen by every Christian to be only the relative one as to his own capacities and the demands of God's cause at that time.

This leads us to add another important class of texts by which the Holy Spirit will inform the judgment, both of the candidate and his brethren, as to his call. It is that class in which God defines the qualifications of a minister of the gospel. Let every reader consult, as the fullest specimens, 1 Timothy iii. 1-7; Titus i. 6-9. The inquirer is to study these passages, seeking the light of God's Spirit to purge his mind from all clouds of vanity, self-love, prejudice, in order to see whether he has or can possibly acquire the qualifications here set down. And his brethren, under the influence of the same Spirit, must candidly decide by the same standard whether they shall call him to preach or not.

3. Our definition of the call to preach asserted that God would make known his will to the candidate and to his brethren, not only through the medium of the Scriptures, but also of outward circumstances and qualifications viewed in the light of Scripture truth. Much has been said by Christians concerning "the leadings of providence," touching the duty of preaching and many other duties. And not a little nonsense, with perhaps some profanity, has been uttered on this subject. It is true that everything which befalls us is determined by God's special providence, for which reason we justly conclude that, in many cases, an occurrence, after it has happened, is a real expression to us of God's will. But there is another truth, that the designs of God's special providence are chiefly reserved among the awful secrets of his own fathomless wisdom. He forbids us to attempt

to surmise his secret purpose from the apparent tendencies of his sovereign dealings, and pointedly remands us "to the law and the testimony" for our practical guidance. The light which "providences" cast upon the question of God's will as to our conduct is chiefly cast backward on the past, not forward on the future. The man who attempts to frame the "leadings of providence" into an indication of duty, instead of resorting to his revealed will, is often in danger of wickedly intruding into those secrets which belong to the Lord our God, and of profanely foisting the selfish leanings of his own inclination upon the Holy One as the teaching of his acts.

There are, indeed, certain dispensations of providence which, in the light of the word, do clearly reveal God's will. If he has deprived any man of the health, the voice, or the knowledge, without which he cannot possibly preach, and has made it absolutely impossible to acquire or regain them, or if he has surrounded a man with clear, unavoidable duties which cannot possibly be postponed or delegated, and which are clearly incompatible with the ministry, here is indeed a sure expression of the divine will that he may not preach. But it has often been said, in well-meant treatises on the call to the ministry, that a Christian may know whether God designs him to preach by the providential facilities which open, or hindrances which seem to bar, the entrance into the sacred office. This rule is to be accepted with many "grains of allowance." If God has facilitated the acquisition of the suitable learning and the other means for preaching, it does indeed present a probable evidence that the person may be called. But the converse is not true. If circumstances have hedged up the young Christian's access to the ministry with obstacles, difficulties, hardships, we freely admit that all these are determined by God's special purpose and providence. But *we do not know what God means by them*. He has not told that young Christian whether he means to tell him thereby that he must not preach, or whether he means it for "the trial of his faith, that being much more precious than gold that perisheth, it may be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Let that man, therefore, take heed how he presumptuously misinterprets a providence which God has not authorized him to read at all; let him turn to the Bible and to prayer. How plausibly might the great

apostle have argued after the modern fashion when he met shipwreck, scourgings, prisons, stoning, wanderings, neglect, poverty in the prosecution of his ministry, that “the *leadings of providence* clearly indicated he was not called to a foreign mission!” But he argued no such thing; he knew better. He said, “None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus.” Does the reader object that Paul had a revealed call, but we common mortals must judge by just these providential events, which he properly disregarded? Let us take then the case of Dr. Wm. Carey, the great Baptist missionary to Hindostan. When he first began to seek his duty, a poor shoemaker with a growing family already upon his hands, without classical learning, without money, without patronage, with the power of the East India Company so arrayed against the gospel that it was forbidden to all their ships even to carry a missionary across the ocean, might not he have plausibly concluded, according to this argument, that “the *leadings of providence*” were against him? But who can now doubt that he was called of God, first to become a preacher of the gospel, and then to begin the Serampore mission? By this cowardly argument Washington would have judged the “*leadings of providence*” to be against the cause of his country. But why mention the ten thousand cases in which history shows us the noblest enterprises were conducted to success, with the final blessing of providence, as no one now doubts, only by braving obstacles almost insuperable? If, then, the young Christian is surrounded with outward hindrances, it is his duty to ask: “Is it possible for me lawfully to conquer them by the most strenuous exertions of my best faculties, nerved by deathless love for Christ?” If it is, then it may be his duty to preach.

4. The Scriptures which define the necessary qualifications of the minister may be digested in substance into the following particulars: He must have *a hearty and healthy piety, a fair reputation for holiness of life, a respectable force of character, some Christian experience, and aptness to teach.* Let us repeat the remark that these particulars are given by the Holy Spirit as a rule by which the church is to judge in calling, as well as the candidate in obeying the call. And let us remark also, with emphasis, once for all, that the young Christian, in concluding

whether he possess these qualifications, should attach much weight to the opinion of judicious Christian friends, yea, even more than to his own, because men are often more in the dark, by reason of self-love, concerning their own characters, than their acquaintances.

The first requisite is *piety*. All Protestants are agreed that it is preposterous to set that man to expound the gospel who neither understands, nor loves, nor believes it. And the weighty responsibilities and cares of the minister require that his piety should be, if not eminent, at least of a vigorous and healthy type. But here the young Christian should take heed to an important distinction. As far as the church and its officers are concerned, it is perfectly just that they should refuse to call or ordain one whose piety is not hearty. But it by no means follows that he may excuse himself from the duty of preaching because he is conscious his piety is low. If he reasons thus he insults God; for how comes it that his piety is low, except by his own fault? Is not the mercy seat open to him, at which he may obtain increase of grace if he will seek? Those states of feeling and principle which stamp his piety as feeble are every one *SINS*; and so is that neglect of prayer and means by which his grace has been stunted. It is *his duty* to be an eminent Christian; yea, a perfect Christian. Now, woe to that servant who obtrudes against his Master one transgression as a justification for a second! It is adding insult to rebellion. And if a man feels that he has not grace enough to preach, he should ask himself whether he has grace enough to serve and please God in any other calling, grace enough to die with, or enough to enable him to enter the awful world of spirits, and stand in an awful judgment. To such a man we solemnly say: there is but one thing you can do, if you would not outrage your God, grieve the Holy Ghost, and run an imminent risk of sealing your own damnation. Do not, indeed, enter the ministry with feeble piety, but at once seek and obtain a hearty piety, in order that you may properly enter the ministry, if it is God's will. In one word, the fact that one's piety is low cannot prove it is not his duty to preach, because he knows it is his immediate duty not to let his piety remain low. That fact is, on the other hand, sufficient evidence to his Christian brethren that, if he *will not* do his duty in seeking more eminent piety, they ought not to call him.

In this connection may be best mentioned another qualification, on which some pious writers have said much, and sometimes very indiscreetly. It is the possession of a *strong desire*; the necessity of which is argued from 1 Tim. iii. 1. "If a man desire the office of a bishop (pastor), he desireth a good work." It is obvious that such an inference from this passage might be easily pushed too far. The same distinction applies here which has been stated in the last paragraph. Of course, the church ought not to entrust the ministry to a man who has no heart to work. The true minister must, of course, have a desire to see souls snatched from hell fire, truth upheld, sin curbed, the happiness of true religion diffused, and the Holy Trinity glorified in the redemption of transgressors. These are the grounds, the motives, or that desire which he feels to preach, if he may rightfully do it. But are not these feelings common, essential, to all true Christians? Does not the absence of them place a very black mark on any man's piety? The church, therefore, in judging a candidate's fitness to be called, will be influenced by his possessing this kind of desire, just as they will by his possessing a healthy piety, and for the same reasons. Hence it is that our "Form of Government" very properly requires the candidate for ordination to answer, Yes, to this question: (See *Form of Government*, Ch. VI., Sec. V., Ques. 5.) "Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God, and a sincere desire to promote his glory in the gospel of his Son?"

But how foolish and mischievous is the perversion of this scriptural truth to argue, as some have seemed to do, that, therefore, if a young Christian does not feel an *abiding and strong desire* for this special work, he ought to conclude that he is not called? Is it so, forsooth, that if a man, to whom God has given the capacities and opportunities to do a certain laborious work for His glory, feels himself sinfully reluctant to it, because of a selfish and cowardly fear of its toils and self-denials, or because of a false and wicked shame, or because ambition and covetousness rather impel him to a different calling, he may, therefore, conclude that he is exempt from all obligations to it? Nay, verily. It is that man's duty to repent immediately of this his reluctance, and to crucify it, for *it is sin*. How can a man be, what every Christian ought to be, except he earnestly desire

God's glory in the salvation of souls? But the minister can usually do more, *cæteris paribus*, for this cause than the layman; so that every true Christian on the earth, young and old, male and female, ought to feel, with reference to the work of preaching, that he would be glad to preach if God permitted him. Away with the notion that the young man is not called to preach unless he hath *fallen in love* with this special work, in some senseless and unaccountable manner, as though pierced with the invisible arrow of some spiritual Eros, or Cupid! It is nonsense, it is wickedness. The Holy Spirit is a rational being, the Bible is a rational book, and every Christian emotion which he produces in the human soul by applying Bible truth is produced according to the laws of the human understanding; it is a reasonable emotion prompted by reasonable and intelligent views of truth.

If we regard the Scriptures, we certainly find there very little support for the necessity of this unaccountable desire. In the third and fourth chapters of Exodus, we read that Moses, when commissioned by God to become the prophet of Israel, displayed his reluctance by so many excuses that the divine wrath was excited. Jeremiah (i. 6 and xx. 9) similarly deprecated the sacred charge. Jonah sought to flee the work; at what cost the reader knows. And Paul says (1 Cor. ix. 16), "Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." He felt that he could claim no credit, because he dared not exercise any option concerning the ministry, but was impelled by the awful conviction that he could only evade this duty at the peril of his soul.

If, therefore, the young Christian does not feel this scriptural desire to glorify God by saving souls, so that he would be glad to do it by *preaching* if he might, he ought not, indeed, to thrust himself into the ministry like a slave going to a hated task. But he ought immediately to suspect himself of some most unchristian influence, of selfishness, indolence, vanity, ambition or avarice; he ought immediately to crucify these base feelings at the foot of his Saviour's cross; he ought never to rest till his heart is in such a frame that the desire to do good, in any way God may point out, is his ruling passion, and he ought to do all this wholly irrespective of his finding his way into the ministry or not. For while his heart is in its present frame, he has

no sufficient evidence that he has ever felt the love of God, and that he has not the wrath of God and the daily danger of hell fire abiding on him. Certainly, without this pious desire, he is as truly unfit to serve God in any other calling as in the ministry.

The three qualifications next mentioned, a fair reputation for sanctity of life, a respectable moral force of character, and some degree of Christian experience, may be grouped together. The man whose Christian character does not command confidence and respect would, as a minister, only dishonor God and his cause. Yet it is every man's duty to reform those inconsistencies by which he has forfeited the respect of mankind, whether he is to preach or not. And having thoroughly reformed them, he may find his way open into the pulpit. The minister must have some force of character. The feeble, undecided, shuffling man, who cannot rule his own family, nor impress and govern his inferiors by his moral force, had better not preach. There may be cases where this weakness of character is found incurable, although co-existing with genuine piety. Again, he must not be in the novitiate of his Christian profession. But this circumstance can very rarely be a valid obstacle to the young Christian's proceeding so far as to begin his preparation. Our church has made this preparation long; for this reason, among others, that the neophyte may acquire Christian experience by the time he comes to his ordination.

The last qualification mentioned is *aptness to teach*. The apostle means by this that assemblage of bodily and mental endowments which will, by due cultivation, enable the pastor to teach God's truth with reasonable efficiency. It includes sufficient bodily strength, an understanding of fair respectability, either the possession of, or the opportunity and ability to acquire, adequate knowledge, and a capacity to attain a tolerable fluency and propriety of speech. Such disease or infirmity as would make it impossible to live and perform the duties of a minister efficiently is a clear indication that a man is not called. But this fact cannot be fairly inferred from every grade of bodily infirmity. Let the reader consider how much a Calvin, a Brainerd, a Payson effected for Christ in spite of bodies bowed down by chronic disease. Yet no one now doubts that God called them to preach. And the perseverance of many resolute men in the laborious professions of this world for the sake of mammon or

ambition, in spite of feeble health, is a most practical evidence that bodily weakness does not necessarily prove the Christian to be precluded from the ministry.

Many young Christians, again, excuse themselves by professing a doubt whether they have natural talents adequate to so responsible a work as the ministry. We fear that in many cases, if their friends were to concur candidly in this doubt, their vexation would betray the insincerity of the pretended humility. Now, we freely assent that Christ has no use for fools in the pulpit. The impotent, beggarly, confused understanding should not undertake to teach other minds. And the very noblest capacities are desirable, and will find ample scope in this glorious work. But nothing more than respectable good sense and justness of mind is requisite to secure such usefulness in the ministry as should decide any pious heart, if that mind is used to the best advantage. Let the *heart* be warmed and ennobled with Christian love, the good common *mind* will be expanded and invigorated, and a conscientious diligence will give it an indefinite and constant improvement. Love and labor will make the small mind great. The late memoir of Dr. Daniel Baker contains an instructive testimony on this point. His energy and success in the gospel led some to remark how eminent he might have been in worldly pursuits; what a *millionaire*, if a merchant; how eloquent, if a lawyer; how popular, if a statesman! But his biographer, who is his own son, says: "No; it was his religion that was his strength; grace alone made him great." Blessed be God, the church has often found that plain talents, faithfully improved for God, by love and zeal, have accomplished the largest good. Let the young Christian, then, judge his own qualification by these truths. It is clear that, in the general, the church must always expect to find her ministers precisely among those who honestly appraise their talents moderately. For who would like to see the young Christian come forward and say "that he felt called to preach *because he considered himself so smart*."

The scholarship which the Presbyterian Church considers necessary for the minister may be seen described in our *Form of Government*. To the acquisition of this any sound mind is adequate, with diligence and perseverance. Such is the provision which is made for aiding the needy, no Christian, except

one too far advanced in life, or precluded by other duties, can plead inability to acquire it. And if there be difficulties or hardships in the way, it may be the will of God that he should manfully surmount them for his sake.

Once more, the incurable stammerer, the man of totally diseased throat, the man who cannot acquire the capacity of speaking in public without a slowness, rudeness, confusion or hesitation painful to the hearers, is not called to preach. Public speaking is the most prominent function of the pastor. But there is scarcely any qualification about which young Christians are more apt to reason delusively. The promise of fluency in early manhood is no sufficient proof of fitness for the pulpit, and the lack of it at that season is no evidence whatever of unfitness. Experience shows that many who early win the reputation of "the college orator" in actual life sink into obscurity, and many who go through college without a particle of reputation for fluency become afterwards famous as effective speakers. And let the reader remember, that a minister may be effective without being melodious, polished or graceful. No young man whose vocal organs are not fatally maimed is entitled to conclude, because he is now unskilled, that he cannot learn to speak to edification. On the contrary, he should conclude that he *can learn* to speak, no matter what his difficulty, if only he will endeavor and persevere. Such is the emphatic testimony of Lord Chesterfield to his son, and he declares that his own eloquence (of no mean fame in his day) was wholly the result of his perseverance. There was a candidate for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church who, even after he commenced his seminary course, stammered painfully. But he resolved, by God's help, to conquer the obstacle, and he is now a most fluent and impressive extempore preacher. There is a most mischievous mistake as to the nature of good speaking. It is but unaffected, serious, perspicuous *talking*. That which is simplest is best. That language which presents the idea with the most transparent naturalness is in the best style. Who is there in his senses that cannot *talk* when he is interested? The man of plain good sense, whose mind is thoroughly informed with divine truth, and whose heart is instinct with divine love, will not fail to find words and utterance.

5. The young Christian is bound also to consider the present

wants of the church, and the relation of supply to demand. The propriety of taking all this into his account is not only obvious to common sense, but asserted by our Saviour himself (Matt. ix. 37), when he makes the fact that "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers few," the ground of the prayer that God would "send forth laborers into his harvest." How can one answer the question aright, "Where does God most need me?" without considering the necessities of his church? Christ has made it the duty of every Christian in the world to offer this prayer. Is not the pious young man mocking God when he offers it, if he is not willing God shall send him into the harvest? Now, it is true in our day that the harvest is plentiful, and that *suitable laborers* are comparatively few. Our home destitutions are large, many of them of long standing, and rather increasing in number. The supply of young ministers barely repairs the waste of death and removals. For the whole pagan world we may be said to be doing nothing, in consequence of the paucity of young ministers; for we have only one soul from the whole Synod of Virginia, a godly woman, laboring on pagan ground. And for the teeming multitudes of the new commonwealths springing up in the west and south we are doing almost as little. But the young Christian, in considering the necessities of the sacred cause, is bound to consider, not only the harvest at home, but everywhere, for "the field is the world." Only one word need be said to remind him how loud and imperative is the call created by the gracious and amazing openings which God is now making over the whole world for missionary effort. It is a trumpet blast, summoning the whole church to arise and reap. Does the wise God sound a blast which he has provided no servants to hear? Openings for ministerial labor are created by the same God who watches over the church, renews souls by his grace, and endows his servants with the capacities for serving him. The prudent farmer only plants so many fields as he has provided laborers to till. The wise manufacturer apporions his machinery and materials to the force at his disposal. It seems a very reasonable inference that when God sets open so many doors for usefulness before his church, he at the same time gives her sufficient numbers and qualifications to occupy as many. If God has made ten openings for useful ministerial labor for every candidate who presents himself, the inference is

very plain that there must be nine men to every ten of these fields, somewhere in the church, whom God calls to preach, but who refuse to go. When, on the one hand, we consider the vast and glorious fields for evangelical enterprise beckoning us on, well may we, on the other hand, stand aghast at the extent of the recreancy to duty which must exist in the church.

This fact, that an extensive and terrible indifference to the claims of the gospel ministry prevails in the church, constitutes an additional and most pressing reason that every young Christian who can should give the influence of his example to break it up. Let us suppose that the commonwealth was invaded by enemies, that in her exigency she was calling for thousands of her sons to take up arms in her defence, and that, from some strange and criminal apathy, an exceeding small and inadequate number were responding to the summons. Would it not be the clear duty of every patriot who could to fly to her aid, in order that a better spirit might be propagated among the citizens? He who, in less urgent times, when the necessary armies of defence were nearly full, would have felt no call of duty to the military profession, if he has the spirit of a man, now feels that he must not hesitate to gird on his sword. So, in our generation, Jesus Christ is calling to his church by the woes of a perishing world, and by the critical conjuncture of such opportunities for evangelizing it as the world never saw before, and may never see again, for ten thousand volunteers; but only a few here and there sluggishly and dubiously respond. Should not every brave man, then, arise and fly to the front, that his gallant example may rebuke the fatal sloth of his comrades and teach them to be ashamed of their hesitation?

If there is force in these reasonings, they have a most sad and peculiar application to the young Christians of Virginia. For, bad as is the case in the rest of the Presbyterian Church, among us it is worse still. A careful calculation shows, that the ratio which the number of our candidates bears to the number of our communicants is not only far smaller than that observed in other favored sections of the church, but smaller than the average in the whole church, and only larger than that in the newest, most destitute, and sparsest Synods. The territory of Virginia is chiefly covered by the Synod of Virginia and Presbytery of Winchester. In these two bodies there are this day not less

than fifty ministers, born, converted, and trained for the ministry in other States, engaged in our service as pastors, teachers and editors. But after subtracting the infirm, we shall probably find scarcely a hundred active ministers positively engaged in the public service of the church. So that, for half our own supply we are now indebted to the help of other sections of the Presbyterian Church, less oppressed than ours with a benumbing worldliness and more alive to the love of God. Perhaps some one may say, that this sad account should be counterbalanced by the numbers of ministers who have gone from the Presbyterian Church in Virginia to other States. After a careful inspection of the catalogue of three thousand names, composing the ministry in the whole United States (to our shame we do not pretend to claim a minister among the pagans), we do not believe that there are forty who were reared in the churches of Virginia. So that, after full allowance for this counterpoise, we find that we do not produce ministers enough to keep up our own numbers; but for the kind aid of better people abroad, we should be dying out—starved to death by our own worldliness. Here, then, is a church one hundred years old, strong in numbers, plentiful in wealth, glorying in her religious freedom, decimated by no pestilence, war, or persecution, prosperous in her external peace, equipped with adequate and accessible schools for the training of her sons. Now, if any church under heaven should be expected not only to keep up her former *status* from her own resources, but to possess all the means for a rapid and vigorous progress at home, and to make liberal contributions of men and money for evangelizing the sister States, which are springing into their giant youth, and the wide world of heathenism, surely such a church should. If such as she may be excused from this, how in the possibility of things is the world ever to be saved? But, lo, instead of doing this, she is still leaning in part, like a dependent weakling, on other sections. Here the Lord hath opened up what he proposed should be a perennial spring, which should not only keep its own basin filled to the brim, but send out streams of life, flowing ever farther and farther, to water the desert sands that lie burning with spiritual drought around it. But instead of this, the water must be brought from other less faithful fountains and continually poured into it to prevent its drying up. Is it then a living

spring? Or is it a stagnant pool, absorbing uselessly in its sands the waters of life that elsewhere might carry fruitfulness and verdure? And will not its Lord at last tire of the unproductive toil, and leave it to be trampled over until its place can no longer be found? It is but too evident that somewhere among the young men of the Presbyterian Church in our State, there is widespread and terrible guilt, because of this neglect of the claims of the pulpit. Let every such Christian ask with trembling, "Lord, is it I?" And it is equally plain, that this fact constitutes a special and solemn reason that every young man who can preach should weigh well whether it is not his duty to set a better example.

Meantime the argument is greatly strengthened by the fact, that all other useful professions, except perhaps that of Christian teachers, are full to overflowing. Go where we may, we see more merchants than can find customers, more physicians than have patients, more lawyers than clients. Society has enough of them—too many. But to supply all our home destitutions, to carry the gospel to every one of the eight hundred millions of pagans on our globe, the church needs a hundred times as many ministers. Now, what young Christian, qualified to preach, who asks in the spirit of the true convert, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" can say in view of these facts, that *God and his fellow-men have more need for him at the bar, behind the counter, or in the physician's calling, than in the pulpit?* If he cannot, let him beware how he neglects the prayerful examination of the duty of preaching, at the peril of the wrath of his Saviour. We hesitate not to say, that while all Christians, of course, are not to be preachers, and while none should preach whom God does not call, in such a time as ours every Christian who can preach, should conclude that the *a priori* presumption is in favor of his doing so until the contrary is evinced; and he should approach the examination of his duty on this supposition.

But many say, "I admit the obligation to choose that calling in which I can most glorify God; let me therefore be a pious lawyer, or physician, in order that I may show these very influential, but often irreligious professions, the right example, and thus begin a revolution in their religious condition. Thus I may do more good than even in the pulpit. Or, let me be a

pious teacher, for do not some such teachers, enjoying the privilege of moulding the ductile minds of youth, do more for Christ than many pastors, to say nothing of the secular benefits of their labors?"

There are two very conclusive answers. First: while we admit with sorrow that there are many inefficient pastors, and while we bless God that there are some noble laymen who save more souls than some ministers, we ask, how the latter case is to be explained? It is always because those devoted laymen exhibit an eminent zeal and love for souls, a perseverance in efforts to do good, a self-denial, a good-sense prudence, which would have infallibly placed them in the very front rank of ministerial usefulness if they had been ministers, and had enjoyed a similar blessing from God in their labors. A Matthew Hale, a Harlan Page, a Samuel Budgett, may indeed be favorably compared with your ill-trained, inactive, common-place ministers, but can he be compared in Christian usefulness with a Baxter, a Payson, a Chalmers? The truth is, the direct and main work of the minister is to save souls; the direct and main work of all secular professions is to secure temporal good; and though the motive of all these secular labors in the case of Christian laymen is pious, their efforts to save souls are incidental and exceptional; their main, direct work is worldly. It is simple absurdity to say, that a given amount of qualification and devotedness may do as much for eternal objects, working for them incidentally, as though it wrought for them directly and mainly. But second: how does the young Christian who turns aside from the sacred calling to medicine—and especially to the law—know that he shall be able to maintain that eminent piety which alone will prevent his becoming a reproach to Christ in those worldly professions? His plea for entering them is founded on this ground in part, that those important and influential professions are now so unfortunately devoid of Christian principle. Aye! How comes this to be so? How comes it that many lawyers, professing Christ, have sunk to a grade of spirituality so low that the salt of grace is still urgently needed to be cast into the profession? Must it not be because the temptations of this calling are so potent—so fatal? Then, if this young Christian thinks that *he*, *forsooth*, has strength enough to stand where so many predecessors—lawyers profess-

ing Christ—have fallen, there is clear revelation of a spiritual pride, of an ignorance of his own heart, which make it very certain that his fall, when he becomes a Christian lawyer, will be most speedy and ignominious of all. “A haughty spirit goeth before a fall.” “He that trusteth his own heart is a fool.”

6. We have now defined and limited the qualification laid down in the Scriptures and indicated in the providence of God, so as to show in what manner, and with what cautions, the inquirer is to reason upon them. Let us gather up the sum of the matter. The Divine will is to be learned from these teachings of the Scriptures, and of events interpreted by Scripture, all studied under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, obtained through prayer. The reader will observe that, in all our remarks, we have supposed him viewing every evidence of a call to preach, *as a reasonable creature*. The whole process has been treated as one to be conducted according to the natural laws of the human understanding. We have treated it thus because we are assured that the Holy Spirit always operates on human souls in accordance with those laws when he instructs them by the Holy Scriptures, his only instrument for rational adults. But let us not be mistaken. The process by which the call is ascertained is strictly reasonable, but it is also spiritual. The true minister is as really “taught of God,” concerning this call, as the prophet in the revealed word was; it is only that the mode of the teaching is different. If the young Christian “leans to his own understanding” in this matter, the deceptions of spiritual pride, self-confidence, love of applause, drawing him towards the pulpit, or of false shame, indolence, carnality, secular ambition, avarice, or other inordinate desire, drawing him away, will infallibly befool him. He will decide wrong. He must conduct his inquiry under the superintendence of the Holy Ghost, purifying and elevating his Christian affections, crucifying his carnal inclinations, infusing a genuine love of God and souls, and thus illuminating his understanding to comprehend the word. There is none but the Spirit of God that can do these things in the soul of the young Christian so as to secure a safe decision. This Spirit will come, indeed, not through the medium of a voice, a vision, or an inspiration, but through the channels of the Christian’s own conscience, judgment, and sanctified affections. Yet his coming is not the less necessary and real.

Ye shall know his presence "by his fruits." Those fruits will be a sweet consciousness of a meek, docile temper, and of thorough sincerity of purpose, a revival of divine love and zeal, and a joyous self-abnegation, resulting at length in a calm, satisfying decision of the great question.

7. Last, then, to obtain this spiritual guidance, prayer must be fervently and incessantly offered. The very act of unveiling the whole heart with transparent sincerity before the Infinite Majesty will itself still the clamor of carnality, and prove as "euphrasy and rue," to purge the mental vision. God has promised also, "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." But let the Christian take care that he ask with a "meek" spirit, with profound honesty of soul, with utter submission of all prejudices and inclinations. Woe to that man who, while he professes to submit the question to God's decision, mocks the Heart-searcher by bringing his own decision to the throne of grace, prejudicated in the secret places of a selfish heart! And the danger is not only on the side of running uncalled, but also of tarrying when he ought to run. The sin of preaching the gospel without God's call has been preposterously equalled to that of Uzzah (2 Sam. vi. 6), or of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. x.). All the differences of a typical worship, a theocratic government and a miraculous separation of the sacred office are overlooked in such a comparison. To intrude into the pulpit without a call is doubtless a sin; for no man possessing such means of instruction and promises of divine light as the Bible affords him can make this mistake, except from the predominance of sinful motives or the neglect of prayer and inquiry. It is a sin which is likely to bring mischief upon the church and chastisement and repentance on the mistaken child of God. But to stay out of the pulpit when called to enter it is also a sin, a sin which can only proceed from evil motives, and which must naturally result in the damnation of souls which should have been saved through the disobedient Christian's preaching, but were not, and which must bring him under the frown and chastisement of an offended Saviour.

The Christian who has begun this inquest and prayer, but is not conscious of the sweet, enlightening influences of the Spirit in his examination, may by no means conclude that therefore he is

not to preach. For the influences of the Holy Ghost are as truly needed to answer the great question rightfully in the negative as in the affirmative. Is there not a possibility of error and sin on either hand? If, then, the reader has felt that while he investigated he did not enjoy those influences, let him by no means conclude that God exempts him from the sacred office; let him rather infer that he is under the hidings of God's countenance, that he is a backsliding Christian, and that he is therefore in imminent danger of perdition.

We conclude with this final caution. The claims of the ministry on Christian young men are so strong that in many cases the head cannot misunderstand them, though the reluctant heart may shrink from them. Such cases often result thus: the undecided Christian says, "I will investigate farther; I will give myself time, and meantime I will teach or seek some temporary business;" or he says, "I will preach; I cannot dispute the duty; but I am young; two or three years hence will be time enough." And then, under this deceitful plea, he plunges unnecessarily into secular business, till its trammels, or the new affections of married life, or some fancied necessity, settle the question, and the man *never preaches*. Show us the case where such a retraction of the better resolution is not evidence of, yea, synonymous with, spiritual decline. Ah, how many are there now in the secular professions, keen, money-loving lawyers, busy politicians, indolent dilettanti, fallen drunkards, degraded reprobates, who were once promising Christians, and whose apostasy began just in this way? Look, young, hesitating professor, at the dire fate of a Balaam. He professed to seek the Lord's will, and he received an expression of it which he dared not dispute. Well would it have been for him if he had then ceased inquiring and gone at once to obeying. But the deceitfulness of his heart prompted him to what he supposed was a middle course. "He would not proceed in the teeth of the Lord's will; oh! no, not he! not for worlds! But he would inquire again;" and the result was that he got no answer from God better than the first, but he secured the damnation of his own soul. To say that you will "consider farther of the matter," after God has made an end of consideration by giving light enough to settle the question, is but virtual disobedience. There is then no time to consider; it is time to act. If you are prepared at present to

preach, and God calls you to preach, then he calls you to preach now. If you have preparation to make, and God calls you to preach, he calls you to begin that preparation now; for a perishing world needs you now; while you causelessly hesitate souls drop into hell. "TO-DAY, IF YE WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, HARDEN NOT YOUR HEART."

MEMORIAL ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.¹

THE undersigned would respectfully state to the Assembly's Committee on Theological Seminaries that he was called at an early age by the voice of the church to her service in theological instruction, and has devoted the prime of his life to it with all the attention and zeal of which he was capable; that he humbly conceives it is both the duty and privilege of the public servants of the church to communicate the results of their experience; that he has been thoroughly convinced by his observation that our system of theological training permits important improvements, by which it might be made more effective for the glory of the Head of the Church and the salvation of souls. He therefore begs the Assembly, inasmuch as the church now enjoys an interval of peace, and no other fundamental subject arises to engross its time and thought, to take in hand at this time this important interest, and perfect the agencies of the church for its execution according to their wisdom. With a view to this result he humbly begs leave, through the Committee on Seminaries, to submit some practical views for their consideration.

Theological seminaries are about forty-five years old in our denomination. This, although more than the lifetime of a generation, is but a short space in the lifetime of a system, so that we may regard this plan of theological training as still a novelty in our church. In many respects it certainly shows the unsettled relations of a new thing, and this justifies continued discussion even of its fundamental traits and principles.

I. The first question is the *form of control* under which such schools shall be formed and governed, assuming for the time that all are convinced of their necessity. The Presbyterian Church has never deliberately decided whether they had best be under the direct control of the supreme judicatory, or of the Synods. In 1809 the General Assembly referred the following questions to the Presbyteries: 1, Shall we have *one* seminary? 2. Shall

¹ To the Assembly's Committee on Seminaries, Mobile, 1869.

we have two equal ones? 3, Shall there be one for each Synod? Twenty-seven Presbyteries responded in 1810, six voting against any seminary, one for two equal ones, ten for one sole seminary, and ten for one for each Synod. It was understood, on all hands, that if either of the first plans was adopted, the direct control should be in the Assembly; if the last, in the Synod. Although there was but a minority for the first plan, the Assembly saw fit to adopt it, and founded one seminary at Princeton. They argued that it would secure a fuller faculty, better course of instruction, more liberal endowment, larger libraries, and a general acquaintanceship of young ministers, and a common *esprit du corps*. These arguments are sufficiently neutralized by the church's growth. It then contained four hundred and thirty-four ministers, seven hundred and seventy-two churches, and twenty-nine thousand communicants. Reasonings which were true for a body of that size soon ceased to be of force by reason of its rapid increase. The church in the South hopes for a similar increase, and should look forward to an increase of the number of seminaries; for the experience of the denomination in the United States has shown that their multiplication is a necessary and proper result of its growth. The pleas for a larger faculty, library and endowment in favor of a single school are exploded by the church's progress in wealth and liberality of giving. The idea that this plan would secure fraternity among the young ministry was illusory, for the *alumnus* of three years before was as much a stranger to the later *alumni* as though educated elsewhere; and the effect, if produced was to be deprecated as tending to that centralization of power and influence so greatly to be dreaded. On the other hand, everything supports the policy of having several seminaries; it is most imprudent to give supreme control over our orthodoxy to any one human institution, when we take into account the fallibility of all things human, the danger of awakening arrogance in the teachers and pupils of an institution so great and overshadowing, the known tendency of scholastic corporations to corruption, and the power which able teachers have over the minds of scholars, either for good or evil. The single thought of the deplorable situation in which the church in the Southern States would now be had Princeton continued our sole seminary, enforces these views beyond a dispute. Un-

less we are peculiarly shortsighted, and blind to the maxim of Solomon, that what has been is that which shall be hereafter, we shall consider it as our settled policy, after so striking a warning, to guard the safety and independence of our church by having several seminaries as checks on each other. There are now two; and every lover of our Zion will desire that neither of these may ever be shorn of a particle of its usefulness, and that they may, in due time, have other worthy sisters.

Now, the General Assemblies of 1809 and 1810 evidently assumed that the efficiency of a direct government by the Assembly required that there should be but one central school, or at most two, and that a multiplication of them would, of course, imply their direct control by more local bodies. This is correct. We shall see that the moment these schools are multiplied, the Assembly becomes an unsuitable and incompetent body for their immediate management. Indeed, it seems to us that from that moment all honest advantages of such control are at an end, and the only practical motive why one among several co-ordinate seminaries should seek or desire it is an unfair purpose to employ the partiality of the common parent, the Assembly, for its factitious advantage over nominal equals.

The General Assembly is "the bond of union, peace, correspondence, and mutual confidence among all our churches." It is the body which expresses the *unity of the church*. The training of its ministry in orthodoxy is a matter of such radical and general importance that here, if anywhere, this unity ought to be expressed by the oversight of the supreme judicatory. But the word *oversight* suggests the kind of control which this common bond of union should attempt over it. It should supervise and exercise a general and careful government over the performance of this function by the bodies beneath it, without attempting to become the direct doer of it. For illustration, surely nothing can be of more universal and radical concernment in the spiritual commonwealth than the admission of members to full citizenship in it. The supreme court does not, therefore, undertake to examine every applicant itself; there are reasons which render this properly the immediate function of a more local body, the church session. But the Assembly lays down for all church sessions the essential terms of admission, and supervises the administration of these terms by her general powers of

“review and control.” Such, we hold, is the general truth as to the direction of theological education. Hence, on the one hand, when the old Assembly, North, attempts directly to govern three or four co-ordinate seminaries, she attempts a task for which she is incompetent; and the attempt leads only to inefficiency, confusion and corruption. On the other hand, for a seminary to make no report to the Assembly, and no acknowledgment of its general power of review and veto, is violative of the church’s unity.

The proper course for the Assembly appears, therefore, to be, to exercise her powers of review and control, by assuming an efficient general control over all the seminaries, and attempting the immediate administration of none. All those fundamental principles and rules which in their nature must be common to every good theological education the Assembly should devise of its own wisdom, and enforce them impartially on all the seminaries. For, obviously, no section of the church should be left without the best attainable education of its pastors; and by what argument can the Assembly excuse itself from the duty and responsibility of giving to all parts of the church that which she deems proper, in this concern, for one part? Such things as these, then, the Assembly should impartially and authoritatively ordain for all the seminaries. What constitutes a liberal course of theological study, after the intent of the constitution? What portion of time, in the main, should be given to study and what to vacation? What should be the general organization of a corps of teachers? What should be the *mole* and what the *extent* of pecuniary aid to those who require it? Under what responsibilities of government candidates should be during their course of study? Whether the attempt to combine scholastic and parochial training at the same time shall be made? etc., etc.

The exertion of its rightful authority by the Assembly over all principles, such as these, which are of equal and common concernment throughout the bounds of our church, would be every way wholesome, removing occasion of unseemly rivalries between seminaries, encouraging the timidity of these institutions against the fear of alienating patronage, by spirited reforms in which they stood alone, and spreading in all parts of the church a grade of attainment and devotion to labor level with that prevalent in the most favored.

But the Assembly should not undertake to fix for any seminary special details, lest by endeavoring to produce uniformity they should work a practical inequality and injustice. Thus, the Assembly should say imperatively what ought to be the course of study for every candidate throughout its jurisdiction. But if there should be a particular seminary to which, by reason of proximity or such reason, the Committee of Foreign Missions should desire to send some young man to be trained for the Choctaw mission, it would be very unwise for the Assembly to ordain, either that that seminary should not have a teacher of the Choctaw language because the other seminaries had none, or that all the rest should have one because this seminary properly had one. The Assembly should say that her candidates everywhere shall as a *general rule* work so many months and rest so many out of the twelve, so as to prevent one seminary from over-working, in ill-judged zeal, or some other from making an unseemly *bid* for the favor of self-indulgent men by underworking. But it would be very unequal for the Assembly to say that given seminaries, seated at places which in the later summer are malarious, shall have session during August and September because other seminaries, in salubrious or mountainous regions, find it well to have session during those months. So of other details, such as the nomination of teachers, etc., etc. The Assembly seems, on its present plan, to be somewhat in this anomalous position: it demits in part the constitutional and all-important functions to which it is competent, and attempts to execute some of those which should be left to its agents.

My conception, then, is, that the Assembly, having ordained a code of general rules for all seminaries alike, fixing every *common principle* in the most enlightened, energetic and constitutional way, should commit the execution of details to boards of directors or curators selected by itself. These boards should be the *first men* of the church; and their travelling expenses and maintenance while engaged in their duties should be invariably paid out of the treasury of the institutions. These boards should be small, not containing more than nine members at the largest. But they should be held under strict responsibility to the Assembly. Their selection should be mainly from the section of the church directly interested in the particular institution; and the preferences of the church courts around the institution as

to their selection should usually receive a certain regard; for as soon as we have more than one seminary, each becomes necessarily, in a certain good sense, sectional; and justice requires that those who have its chief burden to bear shall be considered in its management. But on each board should be about two members not from the section of the seminary. These should be men of national reputation and attainments, and in each case they should be brought by the Assembly from distant and diverse sections of the church, in order to infuse a liberal and broad policy in each board, and to prevent a spirit of nepotism and narrow locality.

To this board, thus constituted, a given seminary should be committed, with sufficiently ample discretion and strict responsibility. The board should manage all details, *including the election of professors*. But the last act, and all *changes* of established rule or usage, should be made subject to the veto of the Assembly; and no professor should be installed until the Assembly had confirmed his election.

Such is, in outline, my conception of the proper plan for carrying out the spirit of the constitution on an enlightened scale. I will now support my views by a series of remarks, the application of which will be plain.

1. When the church determines to have more than one seminary, it has determined that the support of each one, for funds, teachers and students, shall be, in the main, sectional. The eminent reputation of individuals will only educe exceptional cases under this rule. Hence, the supposed *prestige* which would result from a direct national management, must either be illusory or else unfair to equal institutions. The impartiality of the Assembly, if it be impartial, will compel it to make each seminary as truly a local and sectional one, in a good sense, as though under sectional control; hence, a grievous temptation to unseemly rivalries and squabbles. The special friends of each will find that the advantages they hoped to derive from the Assembly in the race of competitions are deceitful, unless they are partial, and so dishonest.

2. The Assembly, while wisely constituted for a body of general review and control, is ill-adapted to the direct government of a school of learning. It is a temporary and changing body; the school is permanent. It is general; the school is local in

its immediate interest. The members come together strangers, and scarcely become acquainted before they part, so that they are unfitted to handle in common a multiplicity of local details. They cannot have time for faithful examination of them all, and if burdened with them will huddle over a part with indecent haste. Thus the pretended government of the schools by it will be no evidence whatever that the collective wisdom of the church has been evoked thereon; but the ordinances made will be, in fact, the dictates of some adroit clique of parliamentary managers. The *Princeton Review* charged that the Assembly at Buffalo actually adopted the plan of instruction reported to them by the directors of Danville nominally, in reality dictated by Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, *without hearing it read!* Thus a plan of instruction, entirely new and anomalous, was propounded as the preference of the Assembly, when in fact not one man in ten of Presbyterians regarded it as anything else than ridiculous. Nor will Assemblies have greater financial skill and care to watch over the funds of an institution. The sectional constituency directly gave the money, values the institution, receives its immediate benefits. The General Assembly only represents it indirectly. Lastly, an Assembly of the kind of ours is the last body to be expected to make a judicious selection of professors; they are without that intimate knowledge of the peculiar qualities of mind, temper, and scholarship necessary to fit one for this arduous post, and they are ever liable to be led astray by the false glitter of some merely popular talent, not to say by other less excusable motives of ecclesiastical demagogism. Who believes that the professors in the late universities of Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia would have been as wisely chosen by the legislatures of those States as by the boards to whom these legislatures entrusted them?

3. Justice requires that the effective management of every seminary shall be shared by those who bear the main burden of its support, in proportion to their interests in it. When the section of our denomination appropriate to the support of Union Seminary, for instance, finds that, after all, it has the burden to bear, the money to pay, the students to furnish, they feel that they ought to have the voice in the management of the institution. Why should strangers to Union, from distant sections, strangers pledged to the support of other and rival institutions,

have equal control with themselves over their money and labors? In the old Assembly this was felt on all hands. How often have not members of the late Assemblies candidly acknowledged that in legislating, and especially in electing professors for the seminaries, they consulted chiefly the wishes of the special friends of each institution? "We voted," say they, "to place a certain brother in this seminary, not because we knew him, but because its friends desired him." Nor could they have properly done otherwise. They could not else have answered the just complaints of its friends. "It is we who have the money to pay, the loss to suffer, and if there is failure, the failure to repair. Why, then, have you, coming from Georgia, coming from Louisiana, refused us the man of our own section, whom *we knew* to be the right one, because he was not personally known to you, when it was not to be expected that you, in your distant section, should know him so well?" Upon that plan the recommendation of the friends of each seminary should and must have a potential influence.

But now, how shall that recommendation be made? Who shall be recognized as the authorized exponent to the Assembly of the wishes of that part of the church? There is no safe answer, and the truth is just this, that an influence must be introduced into the management of these seminaries which common justice demands shall be weighty, and which yet has no declared and constitutional mode to express itself. The old method of election is liable to the vilest abuses of the *caucus system*. When we consider of what poor human nature is capable, and what plots, ambitions and rivalries have been seen in the church, he who needs to have the deplorable results of such a system pointed out must be short-sighted indeed. In the Assembly of 1836, at New York, a professor of church history was to be elected for Allegheny. A professor of the seminary was present as a lobby member, and we were given to understand that Dr. Dickinson, of New York city, was the choice of Allegheny. The most of us had never heard of him; but we necessarily reasoned as above, and elected him. Scarcely had we gotten home when we were told that his election had given great dissatisfaction at Allegheny; that a professor was not the seminary; that he had misrepresented their desires. Dr. Dickinson, it seems, was a man of some delicacy of feeling, and he promptly declined to have

anything to do with the chair, so the seminary was rid of the mistake, at the cost of a year's vacancy, a result continually occurring, by the way, from this cumbrous plan of government.

These considerations are so practical and forcible that the Princeton Seminary adopted the more candid method of having a formal and open nomination from the board of directors of the man they desired. But here, again, if the directory is the proper body to make this nomination, which is a virtual election, why may we not better call it in name what it is in fact, and fairly and squarely give to the directory a *right of election*, with a veto power in the Assembly?

4. The unity, purity and comfort of the Assembly itself, and through it of the whole church, are marred by this direct control. The Assemblies will be perpetually agitated with election and other details. Witness the Assembly of the United States at Indianapolis, Rochester, Buffalo. The questions thus raised are unfit to be introduced into the general court of the church. They involve personal emoluments and dignities; they evoke too many selfish and partizan feelings. The seminaries, if under the immediate care of the Assembly, meet on its floor as competitors for its favor and fostering care. Prominent men will be allured from one to another. Complaints of partiality will be made.

But worse still, those corrupt combinations will be made, known in the slang of the day as "log rollings." The condition will be intimated from one side of the house to the other, "Promote my measure, and I will promote yours." The threat will be hinted, "Dare to oppose mine, and I will thwart yours." It is well known that the Assembly of 1853 placed its seminary at Danville, contrary to the opinion of the western church, and the decision was really obtained by getting the votes of the Princeton clique in favor of Danville. And their motive was *the threat*, ingeniously intimated by Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, that unless they voted for his place he would thrust Dr. Humphreys down their unwilling throats at Princeton. They wanted Boardman, and to escape the former gratified Breckinridge by voting for their location. When members of church courts are so lost to public virtue and purity of principle as to permit motives of partizan or personal concernment thus to dictate their decision on measures of general interest, the days of simony and clerical bribery

are not distant. Why should these heats, intrigues, plots and complications be thrust upon the whole church, to embroil, corrupt and alienate it? Let these sectional and personal matters be kept where they belong. Let each seminary be directly governed by its own section, with a veto power in the Assembly.

The Presbyterian Church in the Southern States had never expressed a formal opinion on the above question. Informally it may be considered as committed to my views. The two seminaries now in existence among them had never sought the direct government of the Assembly. Dr. Thornwell, the great exponent of Columbia, had argued ably against it. In this state of things the three Synods of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama directed their board to transfer the seminary at Columbia, and make it the seminary of the Assembly immediately. This action, if sanctioned by the Assembly, was a virtual decision of the whole principle for the whole church, and in a direction opposite to the previous policy of the church; for it necessitated the other seminaries to "follow suit," whatever their intrinsic objections to a vicious relation, or else submit to see an equal or junior elevate itself into a pretended superior by seizing an artificial distinction, and thrusting itself more prominently before the whole church as *par excellence* its own national institution. And not only was the action adopting Columbia virtually a revolution of the principles of the whole church on this question, but the friends of the opposite views felt that they had reason to complain because it was effected without mature and general discussion, and at a time of confusion and distress. The three Synods which made the application came very near being the judges in their own suit, for their commissioners were nearly half of the whole number in attendance. Nor can they wholly justify this impropriety by saying that this was the fault of the absentees; the whole public mind was imperatively engrossed by the war; it was physically impossible for Texas, Arkansas, and parts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Northern Virginia to attend. The ground of complaint against this haste is strengthened by this, that remonstrance was addressed to the leading movers of this radical change against pressing it at such a time, but it was unavailing. It would seem but fair, then, that the opponents of the change shall hold it subject to reconsideration.

II. The second point is as to the plan and constitution of the seminary itself. All our seminaries have hitherto, in thoughtless imitation of New England colleges, organized their course of studies into a *curriculum* measured by a certain term of years, in which all matriculates pursue the same studies for the same time and in the same order. On this plan the professors not only rule, but also teach, jointly, not as independent persons, but as a faculty, each one only occupying in connection with his colleagues his allotted share of the students' allotted time. So the examinations are the examinations of the faculty: This plan, although possessing some advantages to recommend it in *gymnasia* intended for the drilling of youths in science and languages in the case of a professional school, has nothing whatever to recommend it. It has been generally discarded by the continental universities of Europe, partly by the English, and wholly by the best schools in our country. We should discard it here. Our seminaries should be organized into three schools, one of theology, one of ecclesiology, and one of Biblical literature, having two professors, (if you please, a Greek and a Hebrew, dividing between them matters of introduction and exegesis). While the professors should move in concert as to hours of teaching, discipline, and police, and in these things, and the general exercises in public speaking, constitute a faculty, yet in teaching his course, each one should be an independent teacher, responsible only to his employers. Each department should be an independent school. Each professor should judge for himself the extent of his course. He should examine his own pupils himself, for, notoriously, no one else can do it thoroughly at once and justly to his students. The idea that the examination is the exercise of the faculty, or worse yet, of the board of directors, is impractical and absurd. The standard of proficiency which he should exact should be fixed, and *fixed high*, by his employers; otherwise the examining should be as completely his own personal work as the teaching. Students should then be allowed to take such schools as they find convenient, under judicious advice, and consume as much or as little time in completing their studies as they need. The idea of a *curriculum* measured by years should be utterly ignored. The course, indeed, should be made so rich that no mortal, whatever his preparation or talent, could complete it in less than two

years, the constitutional *minimum* of study. But as for the rest, let the student's own capacity alone decide for him whether he shall expend two, or four, or five years in the course.

And here is the first advantage which I mention of this organization, that it abolishes the irrational measure of time for different men's capacities. It no longer attempts to stretch the quick and the dull together on the Procrustean bed of three years. Second, it communicates intense energy to the efforts of the instructors, by opening the way for an honorable emulation among themselves. The efficient no longer feels that he has to carry an inefficient colleague along on his shoulders. *The different schools no longer have of necessity the same number of students.* A young man may take the school of church history and government in this seminary, and go to some other for the school of theology, where it is more efficiently taught. And this leads us to remark that thus active young men are enabled to get the very best education in the least time, by taking in each seminary only those schools which are most approved. Third, this organization will soon lead to a vastly-improved standard of examinations and tests. When the instruction is conducted, and literary honors are awarded by the faculty acting as a body, the standard is practically that of the lowest, least efficient man in the faculty. No one professor feels personally responsible for the misdirection of honors and awards, or the degradation of the standard of acquirement. That standard has to be kept down for all the faculty to the grade of the slowest and most perfunctory man in it. But by separating the schools, the energetic and spirited men are untrammelled; they feel a personal responsibility for the honor of the literary awards in their departments; they practice a wholesome thoroughness in teaching and testing. Nor is the advantage of thoroughness in a part of the course all that is gained. The thorough men stimulate their more indolent and relaxed colleagues, and set a fashion of literary zeal which they dare not wholly disregard. Once more, the present injudicious plan of our seminaries forbids a liberal-minded professor much to enrich or enlarge his own course. He has to teach it in a certain fixed fragment of the three years' time. He cannot enlarge it, except by robbing his colleagues of the time they are entitled to occupy the common pupils. Let the professor of theology, for instance, endeavor to give a larger knowledge on

some point of his course by referring to abler or newer authorities, or any otherwise, and in a day or two he will hear a complaint from some other professor, that he is egotistically *monopolizing* the students; that young Mr. A. or B. went to that other professor unprepared, and boldly justified himself by saying that the professor of theology absorbed all his time. Thus this system actually creates obstacles, where none need exist to progress and improvement of the course. But let the idea that the student is bound to take a given number of studies in any given time be exploded; let him be told from the first that he must judge for himself how much or how little he should undertake; that if he finds he has not time for theology and those other studies also he has only himself to blame for it, he has undertaken too much, and nobody hinders him from rectifying that mistake. Then this unfortunate limitation will be thrown down. Each professor will be entitled to exact as thorough work of his school as his own judgment points out without a seeming infringement of his colleagues' rights. I will venture the assertion that, while such a *curriculum* might possibly make a tolerably just distribution of a youth's time between the drill-tasks of geometry and syntax, no professional school can ever be taught on that plan in a truly liberal and expanded spirit. If the directors would have a truly fine school of divinity, they should talk thus to each of their professors: "You are sole judge of the amount of labor needed for proficiency in your department. Exact as much as you judge necessary. Should you occupy the whole year of a student in your sole course, we shall not complain. The harder you make it to acquire the honors of your department, the better for our young ministers."

III. This leads us to the third point of remark: the propriety of educating young ministers under literary responsibilities and collegiate rules like other men. There is on all hands a lack of fidelity in applying the tests of character and scholarship for licensure. Presbyteries, because the seminaries profess to give a certificate on examination of a mature course of study, are far too much inclined to take for granted the candidate's scholarship. As a matter of course he who has his seminary testimonial gets his license. Where, in practice, is the instance to the contrary? But the faculties of the seminaries on their part excuse their laxity by saying, "We are not a Presbytery. Our

award has no constitutional authority. It is not worth our while to reject a dunce, for he will go before some easy, good natured Presbytery and get our decision reversed, and come back triumphant, to twit us with his license. Besides, if we are not very strict in examining, it does not much matter, because another trial is still to come after ours." Thus the duty is bandied from one to another, and faithfully performed by neither.

When instances of glaring deficiency in scholarship occur, a part of the Presbyteries are usually conscientious, and would do their duty by postponing or refusing license. But to take the lead in such acts is painful, invidious, and there are always some brethren, in whom goodness of heart has swallowed up good sense, who come to the rescue of indolence and ignorance. "Well, Moderator, I doubt whether many of us would not be unable to answer some of these questions any better than this young brother. We all know that it is not the most learned man who makes the most useful minister. With zeal and industry, I don't doubt this young brother will do a great deal of good; it would be a sin to disappoint that good by refusing him license, now that the church stands so greatly in need of ministers. Gifts are better than book learning. Our Daniel Bakers, with an imperfect education, have done ten times as much for Zion as we common men with all our education. I was pleased with this young brother's popular sermon, and don't doubt he will be very useful."

Such are the arguments which we are accustomed to hear on these occasions. It is wholly forgotten that we are a religious commonwealth, governed by a written constitution, which every presbyter is sworn to enforce; that a certain scholarship is there required in the ministry; and if this requisition is found unnecessary, the only proper or honest course is first to seek an amendment of this constitution. It is forgotten that the very proof which the Presbytery should have, the only sufficient proof of that zeal and industry in the candidate which would make him a useful minister in spite of ignorance, is diligence in improving the means of education which the church has provided for him; and that his failure to improve them properly is the very evidence which the Presbytery is bound to take, that he has not zeal and industry, and will be as lazy in the ministry as he has been in the seminary. It is forgotten that God requires

each man to serve him with all his mind and strength; so that when a Daniel Baker, with his neglected talents still, in virtue of natural gifts, effects five times as much as one of us common mortals, it is no justification to him. For the thing God exacted of him was *all the service* those talents, cultivated, could yield; and if it is true that, with diligent training, he might have done yet more for his God, he is truly a delinquent. The servant that could have brought ten talents increase, would not have been justified by bringing five, like his humbler neighbor, who was applauded for his five.

But the Presbyteries are not the chief delinquents. The seminaries are managed upon a preposterous plan, which any man's common sense may see would disorganize any other school. They have virtually no government over students, no roll call at prayers or recitation, no police, no grade of scholarship enforced, no marks at recitations, no responsibility of students to teachers. Each pupil does that which is right in his own eyes; he fears no demerit; if he chooses to learn next to nothing, the professor has no penalty; and at the end of three years every student who has in form attended all the examinations receives his certificate of proficiency. Now is it not the plainest thing in the world, that where a given number of young men apply for graduation, and *all receive it*, the testimonial so conferred ceases altogether to be any evidence of proficiency? And since in every group of human beings some will be found inefficient wherever there are no rejections, the testimonials of scholarship must be worthless.

The tendency of such a no-system is to impair diligence and scholarship. If this result has not followed, it is due to the unusually high character of our Southern candidates, which performs its duties in most cases without impulsion. But it has not always been so in seminaries. It may at sometime be otherwise among us; nor is our neglect of system now entirely harmless. The scholarship of our young ministry loses in depth what it has gained in extent of surface; in many, the habits of research and knowledge of the learned languages is soon lost after they enter upon their active duties. The average grade of diligence is not what it should be in the seminaries, nor even equal to that of the better students in secular institutions. I shall not, of course, be understood as saying that it is as low as the

average which we should find in the colleges, by taking all the idle and dissolute who are found there along with the diligent. It is believed that the standard, both of literary attainments and of industry in study, is as high in Union Seminary as in any Presbyterian seminary. But very often has the writer asked the better students here, "Are you studying now as you did when competing for an honor in the senior class at college?" And the answer has usually been, with a smile at the absurdity of the question, "Why, no, of course not; not by any means." But surely, as the young Christian draws nearer to his sacred and responsible work as a minister, and enters upon the more essential preparations for it, this is no time to relax any of the effort of which he has shown himself safely capable. The church should be satisfied with no diligence in her ministry beneath that which is exhibited by the foremost in secular professions. While she has employment and reward for every grade of *capacity*, even the humblest, she has no use for any grade of indolence, or for any but the highest *energy*. The times demand that she should realize in the zeal of her ministry the promise by Zechariah, "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David as the angel of the Lord before them."

This ill-judged facility, in both Presbyteries and seminaries, operates only to repel the minds which we should most desire to win. A Presbytery sits under a solemn oath to execute faithfully the constitution of the church. It may repeat to itself, with no little propriety, the words of the eighty-second Psalm: "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the rulers." The body proceeds under these sacred sanctions to perform one of its most solemn acts, the trying of those who are to be examples and guides of Christ's flock. But the tests actually applied are often so different from those prescribed in the constitution, that the whole proceeding is a mere mockery of fidelity. The candidate is professedly tried to see whether he can write Latin, whether he knows well Greek and and Hebrew, science and history, theology and interpretation, and when the trials are carried far enough to make it pretty manifest that he does not know these things in a proper sense, it is voted that he does know them, and he is licensed. How can it be made more certain that this candidate thus admitted shall be himself an inefficient, unfaithful presbyter all his minis-

terial life than by thus signalizing his clerical birthday with a general example of presbyterial unfaithfulness? And what can be the impression concerning the moral grade and dignity of the ministry among those who propose to pursue their secular professions with an honorable energy and fidelity? Much has been said concerning the unwillingness of our young men of promise to seek the ministry, and many explanations have been suggested. We verily believe that one of the most important is this, that admission has been too easily obtained. The spirited and ingenuous young man feels no disposition to enter the lists for a prize which he sees bestowed with indiscriminate looseness on the unworthy and worthy alike. He was proposing to win the honor by industry and strenuous exertion; he is disgusted to see it bestowed on mediocrity. Only the ignoble value a prize which may be won without exertion or merit. The spectacle exhibited in the seminaries thus concurs with the mismanagement of the Presbyteries to repress the zeal and aspirations of every young man of mettle. In proof, we point to the well known fact that in those colleges and universities where a high grade of scholarship is faithfully applied, this strictness and consequent difficulty of attaining the honors is a prime element of their popularity with all spirited young men, such as are worth having in the seminary. And this element of popularity is ever strongest among the young men themselves. The writer speaks that which he *knows* of his own observation, that when himself a student, the thing which above all others fired the hearts of young students with admiration for the University of Virginia, and longing to study there, was the conviction that its examinations actually meant all that it professed, and that its honors were hard to win. This, above all other influences, filled its halls with the first young men of the land.

On this subject we would commend to all the wise remarks of Archbishop Whately on the University of Oxford, that its history has always shown literary honors *cease to be sought* whenever they become so attainable that nobody fails of them. In like manner, our unfaithfulness in applying a professed test repels young men of high and ingenuous impulses.

The faculties of our seminaries should therefore assume a posture accurately conformed to the principles of our constitution. The Presbytery is the master, the judge, the guardian of all the

candidates for the ministry, whether licensed or unlicensed. The theological faculty is but the teaching agent of the Presbytery to train its candidates. It is not a Presbytery. Let not the agent, then, assume the functions of the guardian and judge. But, at the same time, let not the guardian and judge be ignorant of the result of his agent's labors. In a word, the agent should *report all these results to his employer*; there his power ends. The appropriate policy for our theological faculties would be, then, to discard for ever the notion of giving a general certificate of having finished the *curriculum*, a sort of paper diploma, which is often a *quasi* license. But they should keep accurate records of each student's diligence in study, punctuality in recitations, and attention to the ordinances of religion, of his daily and yearly scholarship, as compared with a fixed grade, of his energy of character and conscientiousness as displayed in his academic demeanor. Each professor should examine faithfully the student's proficiency at the end of each session and graduate his scholarship accurately. A grade of proficiency should be fixed, and he who fell below this should be held not to have a competent acquaintance with the subject. Then let the professors faithfully report the whole to the Presbytery to which each student belongs. Let the latter body, when it comes to decide whether the candidate is worthy of licensure, have all the facts before it, so that it may know, not only by a brief and imperfect examination in Presbytery, but also by the recorded testimony of its teaching agents, the exact degree of his diligence, knowledge and Christian walk. Then the responsibility of deciding would be wholly placed, in fact as well as in form, where the constitution places it. Presbyteries might still be indiscreetly easy, but they would have no pretext in their relations to the seminary to be so. The young man might believe that a facile Presbytery would license him in spite of the unfavorable report of his professors, but every one who had any honorable self-respect would yet be stimulated by the knowledge of the report to be made. It may be said that all this college apparatus of roll-calls, of marks of grade, of demerit marks, of reports, would treat divinity students too much like school-boys; that such a scholastic regimen is a reproach cast upon their principles; that if it has any effect, it can only be by substituting a carnal fear and rivalry and appetite for applause for conscien-

tiousness, thus degrading the nature of the young minister's motives; and in fine, that unless a young man has conscience enough to be diligent without such *stimuli*, he is certainly not fit for a preacher.

True; and the very thing we wish to find out, by holding him in the position of a candidate, is whether he is fit for a preacher. How can that question be settled except by keeping and laying before the appointed judges a record of his conscientiousness? Surely it is a senseless arrangement to hold a man for a number of years under *a trial* as to this very point among others, and yet take no notice of the manner in which he stands it; and that such a surveillance is a reproach upon the honor of the good student, is certainly not the doctrine of the apostle, who teaches us that the same law which is a terror to evil-doers "is a praise to them that do well." The short and complete answer to all such shallow reasonings as those of the objection is that, by the same rule, all repressive and punitive measures in church and state ought to be abolished, lest they should seem to cast a slur on good people. Let the student show himself by his conduct a good one, as is his plain duty, and then the regimen and report will be naught but a testimonial to his honor. We should like to be convinced by what title these wards of the Presbyteries are to claim an irresponsibility the like of which no other class in Christian society enjoy. Children are placed by God's ordinance under the rule of parents, and citizens under that of magistrates. The ordained ministers of the church are governed, are required at church courts to answer to a roll-call, are forced up to their duties by penalties; but it seems candidates for the ministry are to be held as greater and better than they: too great to submit to, and too pure to need any government.

Nor is it easy to see how a conscientious student can be made less conscientious by knowing that if he were to fail in his duty, he would incur certain unpleasant personal consequences. All desire of the 'approval of the good is not wicked. A value for the approbation of God's dear children, seconding a desire for the approval of God himself, is not evil, but good. All emulation is not sinful. Paul commands us to provoke one another to good works. A fairly-earned literary honor is a legitimate cause of pleasure to a Christian heart, where the attainments are

all consecrated to God. The good sense, modesty, and piety of all our candidates at this time does, indeed, shame these sophisms, and leave almost nothing for collegiate discipline to effect. But suppose there should be many cases in which students show none of this high etherial conscientiousness, to which it is presumed even the fear of just blame, and desire of the applause of the good, would be a taint, but in its place exhibit a sheer laziness and indifference? Is not a little eye-serving industry even better than absolute idleness? Practically we think it is; though he would be a very sorry sort of minister who was governed mainly by either. But common sense and the laws of the mind concur in teaching, that if we would strengthen any virtue which was before deficient in the soul, we must procure the outward exercise of it by any innocent means we can apply. It is by acting it grows. By evoking the outward acting of the quality the potent law of habit is brought into play, and thus the good quality is confirmed. We train our children to kindness by compelling them, through fear, to forego acts of violence and cruelty. We do not argue that, because an enforced mercy is of no worth in the eyes of the Searcher of hearts, therefore it is well to permit every indulgence of angry tempers until conscience checks them. Every sensible parent knows that, under such a preposterous plan, conscience never would be enough developed to restrain the soul of itself.

There is good reason to suspect that a more practical objection to this scheme of education arises out of the sensitiveness of the seminaries to their rivalry about numbers. Now, if there is sense and reason in placing all the seminaries under the control of the Assembly, it is precisely for this, that the Assembly, exercising its supreme authority, may deliver all the seminaries effectually from the *incubus* of these timidities and rivalries, by rigidly compelling them to move abreast in wholesome, but stringent, reforms. Unless the Assembly will do this, it is hard for me to see what Assemblies are for.

IV. The next point to be discussed is the attempt to combine a practical training in parochial duties with the literary and religious cultivation of the divinity student. In 1853, the Synod of Virginia committed itself definitely to that attempt, and partly for that object lengthened the vacation to four months, in order that students might engage in colportage, and similar duties.

In my opinion, the attempt has been a failure and should be relinquished. No one can dispute that a practical knowledge of pastoral duties, and skill in preaching the gospel from house to house, are essential to the scribe who is thoroughly instructed to the kingdom of God. But it by no means follows that therefore the two kinds of preparation must, or can be, pursued together. A sword needs to be not only forged and tempered, but ground. Until the latter is done, it will not cut. Yet the smith does not attempt therefore to grind it while he is tempering it. The one process would spoil the other. So, the attempt to give thorough scholarship, and that to cultivate pastoral tact at the same time, have been found incompatible. A great deal has been said of the uselessness of green, awkward, impractical book-worms. Much of this is true; but I see no evidence that the awkwardness is produced or increased by the scholarship. The former defects are usually the consequences of natural traits of taste and temper, which thorough mental culture would rather correct than exaggerate. The rest of the cure must be effected, if at all, by the young minister's own experience under the pressure of pastoral responsibilities.

But, as a general rule, our students cannot be made to employ the summer vacation in colportage. Some excuse for this may be found in the fact, that the heat of the season is noxious to the constitution of a person whose life is suddenly changed at the beginning of summer from sedentary to active. Cases have been known at Princeton in which zealous men have contracted diseases from exposure to these unaccustomed heats and fatigues, brought them back to the seminary, lost the session by them, and even died with them. Be this as it may, the fact is, that the bulk of our students spend the time in visiting, or recreation only.

Now, four months are obviously too long a time to idle. Yet, eight months are too long to study continuously and industriously. Towards the conclusion, the animal spirits will flag, the cheek pale, and the digestion become deranged. The old method of two terms yearly, with two short vacations, is the true one. Ten months should be devoted to study, and two to recreation. During the years which are intended for mental culture, this culture should be the main thing, and all should bend to the securing of the best results in the main point. In the average run of

constitutions (and a general plan should be adjusted for the average, and not for the exceptional, cases), the benefit of rest and change of scene is all reaped in the first few weeks; the elasticity of the system reacts, appetite returns, and all is done to recruit the body that rest can do. The student then returns to the seminary without so grievous a chasm in his studies and habits. He resumes his books before he has become "*rusty*" in last session's acquisitions. He sets in with life and studies for five months without injury, and about the time his energies begin to flag, another moderate season of rest recurs. But upon the plan of one session annually, eight months are a period too long to study well, and four months are certainly too much to play. The customs of our fathers of the English public schools, and of the universities, bear me out. We departed from them chiefly for this plea, that in our extensive country too much time and expense are required to take the remoter students home and back again twice a year. Railroads have exploded this argument. The fact is, that few of our students are now content with one journey a year; the most get tired of the monotony of a long session and spend money and time in going, not home perhaps, but to some city. The difference is, that this second trip is stolen time.

But the one session and the long vacations are now the fashion; and a return to old usages would be unpopular with students. Here, again, the general legislation of the Assembly should be invoked.

V. Another important point in which our training for the ministry needs adjustment, is the form in which aid should be extended to meritorious young men of scanty means. The present plan of making them beneficiaries of a Board of Education has been advocated by venerable names, and has produced some good fruit. But "one swallow does not make a summer." The propriety of the plan is not proved by some exceptional results, which may be accounted for by other causes, but by a fair general view of its working upon the whole. The writer freely confesses that his dissatisfaction with the plan has been radical; it has usually succumbed partially to the mere *authority* of such names as the elder Alexander, without ever being rationally removed. I once made just this statement to Dr. Addison Alexander (a very wise and practical man, despite his recluse habits),

and he replied that I had expressed precisely his state of mind; and he concurred, in the main, in all the views which I am about to state.

Notwithstanding the plausible justification which is made of the attitude of the beneficiaries, the instincts of a good many of our ministers have obstinately dissented, and they have refused to accept such aid. Now it is of some weight to remark, that this class of our ministers is certainly not behind others in evangelical spirit and character. It was the emphatic testimony of Dr. Addison Alexander that these beneficiaries seemed to him to be worse strung, and toned to a lower key of effort, than the young men who supported themselves; that there was a sort of indifferent and cowed spirit about all they did. It is now manifest that the character of the Presbyterian ministry in the Northern States has deteriorated for some cause; and many judicious men account for it by the introduction of so many persons of lower breeding and mercenary views. Jeroboam corrupted the religion of Israel partly by making priests of the lowest of the people. Now the ministry, especially in the South, must be gentlemen in bearing and principle. Mere conversion, while it may make a peasant a Christian, confessedly does not make him a gentleman. Hence, any plan which contemplates rearing the bulk of the ministry out of the lower classes, must produce a deteriorated class. When we say this, we by no means claim a monopoly of all the honor and principle for the upper classes; nature has her noblemen of all classes. But these men of innate nobility born in the lower classes will raise themselves by an invincible energy to the grade they deserve, and the effort of doing so will be the needful test and discipline of their character. Where a wholesale provision is made for elevating men of that class promiscuously, without subjecting them to that test and discipline, the inevitable result will be the introduction of a majority of scurvy characters, who should have remained in the rank they were born in. The plan of the old Board of Education in connection with other church machinery prepared a way by which *any man* could be *floated* into the ministry and a living without any special effort. Hence, the temptation to mercenary men to seek this aid was too strong. It is looked to as a mere living. The safeguards of Presbyterian examination will never be sufficient. The church must have a *practical test* of the man-

ifest mettle, capacity, and disinterestedness. As was remarked to me by Dr. Alexander, in the case of young men of wealth and worldly prospects, of your C. C. Jones, Van Rensselaers and Sampsons, this test is given in their sacrificing a brilliant worldly future, and adopting a profession whose worldly emoluments are to them unimportant, and rather a loss than a gain. But the young mechanic has no such worldly prospects; a minister's worldly compensation is to him an important gain as compared with day labor. And if the test of devotion presented by strenuous exertion to overcome his difficulties and educate himself be wholly removed by the church's alms, there is no practical guarantee left that he is not mercenary, and that he is not a feeble, inefficient person. Hence, it is a fatal mistake for the church, in its generosity, to lift all the difficulties out of such a man's way.

It has been often argued in defence of our education alms, that they were not alms at all, but a fair debt; that in expending money to educate a poor and pious youth for usefulness, the church was not giving to him, but to herself: that when he had given *himself* to the work, it was nothing but right the church should give the filthy lucre. We believe that this statement is exaggerated. The man who feels aright the privilege of preaching Christ will recognize the aid which places the work in his reach as a very precious personal benefit. It may be reasonable and right that the rich Christians who bestow it should feel bound to do so; but it is none the less a gift to the recipient. Moreover, to the class of men who receive this aid the ministry *is* a social promotion, and help to reach it is as truly a personal gift, yea, a gift of secular value, as a tract of land would be. Now the current doctrine of our Boards of Education leaves the moral sentiments of the beneficiary in an unwholesome posture. Is he taught to deny that the gift is a gift? Here is an odious schooling in ingratitude. Does he recognize it as a gift? The personal giver is unknown, and gratitude has no object, except an abstraction. Thus all that cultivation of the heart, which is a chief part of God's object in alms-giving, is lost.

It is also to be remarked that, after all the specious justifications of the plan, there is usually a lurking feeling of degradation about the recipients of this aid; they cannot but feel that, for a strong, able-bodied man to receive public alms in such a

country as ours, under the name of getting an education, makes him a sort of pauper. This humiliation is obviously increased by the odious system of reports, distinguishing them from their richer comrades (yet, though odious, a necessary corollary of the scheme), by which their receiving their appropriations is made to depend on the private report of a sort of professorial inquisition. But this difficulty would be removed by adopting for all students a system of strict responsibilities, as above recommended.

Now, there *should* be means provided for aiding, and thus abridging, the preparation of meritorious young men, and where they are already of mature years, saving their time to the church. But this aid should be the exception, not the general rule. It should come from two sources: 1, The gifts of personal benefactors, personally interested in the recipient, so that the whole transaction would be one of *private Christian friendship* between man and man; 2, Scholarships in our literary institutions. And these scholarships should be what their name denotes, *awards of merit*, bestowed as prizes on actual examination upon such as had won them over their fellows by superior diligence, integrity and capacity. And let not the *indigence* of the applicant be named as a qualification for receiving. If the *best student* is as rich as a Van Rensselaer, let him take the prize, if he demands it. If the poor student *needs* it, let him show his mettle and *win* it. Then, instead of feeling humiliation in the help obtained, he will feel elevated and invigorated. The colleges should have a few such prize scholarships, to be bestowed for merit in the academy, and enjoyed while passing through college. The seminaries should have more, to be bestowed on those who won them by excellence in their college course, or in the first and second year's work of the seminary.

For reasons above indicated, it is believed that the church should never adopt it as her established rule to bear the whole charge of any candidate's education in any form. It is all-important that a part of this burden be left resting upon himself as a test of his disinterested devotion and a training of his hardihood. Woe to the purity of the ministry if the church ever departs permanently from this principle. What the indigent candidate needs is help to make his progress possible; not such

help as supersedes the necessity of using his own limbs to walk in that progress. But we freely admit that our discharged soldiers constitute an exception to this rule. They have expended four years in the service of their country, and have left the army utterly impoverished. They are too old to be longer delayed; the church needs them now. They should be borne through their preparation without a day's delay. But when this meritorious class is exhausted, the Assembly should imperatively require all the seminaries and its Committee of Education to return to the old rule, which extended only *help*, and not a maintenance.

VI. In conclusion, the relations of those sciences (as geology) which affect the credit of inspiration should be studied by divinity students on the right footing. It *is* desirable that at least a part of our clergy be well informed upon these subjects. But to make the study of them, therefore, a part of a divinity course in a school strictly ecclesiastical appears to me extremely objectionable for several reasons.

First, when thrust thus into a divinity course, the instruction upon these extensive and intricate sciences must needs be flimsy and shallow, a mere sketch or outline. The result will be that our young ministers will not be made natural historians, but conceited smatterers in these branches of knowledge. There is no matter in which Pope's caution should be uttered with more emphasis:

“Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.”

The great lights of these sciences, armed with the results of life-long study, are not to be silenced, if perchance infidel, by a class of men who make it a by-play to turn aside from their own vocation, and pick up a scanty outline of this foreign learning. These clerical smatterers will only make matters worse by displaying their own ignorance; and their so-called defences of inspiration will provoke the contempt and sneers of their assailants. If Christianity needs to be defended against the assaults of natural science with the weapons of natural science, it must be done by competent Christian laymen, or by the few ministers who, like Dr. Bachman, are enabled to make natural science a profound study. Let our Cabells defend the “unity of the race” while our pastors preach the simple gospel.

Second, The tendencies of such a course will be mischievous as to both the professor and his pupils. The latter will be found more inclined to mere human learning and to the conceit which usually attends it, and which always attends a small degree of it, babbling the language of geology and ethnology with a great deal more zest than they recite their catechisms. The undoubted soundness of all our present teachers and clergy, and their unfeigned reverence for inspiration, now blinds us to the ulterior tendency of such attempts. It may be two or three generations before the evil comes to a climax, but I would solemnly declare that it will be found that the most mischievous skepticism and the most subtle doctrines of anti-Christian science will be just those propagated from these church schools of natural science; and after a time the church will have more trouble with her defenders than with her assailants; for the spirit of these sciences is essentially infidel and rationalistic; they are arrayed, in all their phases, on the side of skepticism. The professor placed in the seminaries, remembering that he is the exponent of the *natural* sciences to the theologues, will feel bound to expound them as held by some naturalists. Hence, his expedient will be, to adopt that phase of them propounded by these non-Christian authors least glaringly obnoxious to the authenticity of inspiration. But this phase will also be found covertly anti-Christian, and the attempt to make it tally with Scripture will only betray the church professor into a rationalistic mode of dealing with Scripture. This is the rationale of the fact that it is precisely from the professed Christian geologists the most insidious books have come, because nominally friendly. Thus no book of geology is more thoroughly impregnated with the secret *virus* of rationalistic infidelity than the *Testimony of the Rocks* written by a Hugh Miller for the professed purpose of defending the Bible.

Third, and chiefly, The scheme of science adopted to reconcile the authority of Scripture with itself is ever a matter of difference among orthodox Presbyterians themselves, and is not, and cannot be made a part of the body of our creed. But a man is set up by ecclesiastical authority, paid with the church's money, to teach the church's wards some such scheme. Hence endless contentions. For instance, does the professor of natural science

say of geology that because the fact which it attempts to settle by empirical deduction is the fact of a creation, the work of an omnipotent agent, therefore, in the very approach to this question the validity of such deductions fails, and all such speculations are superseded, because this fact of a supernatural creation, if it has occurred, has transcended all natural law? Does he hence briefly infer, as I do, that such speculations about the mode and date of creation must, by a logical necessity, always be incompetent to natural science, no matter how extended? Then Drs. Hitchcock, Hodge, and a great multitude will cry out: "You old fogy, the church did not put you there to discredit her in the eyes of the scientific world by such antiquated stuff. You misrepresent her; you abuse your trust."

Does he, on the other hand, attempt to reconcile Moses and geology, by adopting Hugh Miller's theory that the six days were six vast ages? Then I shall cry out against him: "Sir, you are giving a mortal stab to Christian faith, by countenancing a licentious, rationalistic canon of interpretation, and you are involving God's sacred truth in a still pending squabble between the worldly advocates of science touching the disputed agreement of the order of events in Genesis, first chapter, and the chronological order of the fossils. You shall not be permitted to commit the Presbyterian Church to this pernicious scheme, however you may choose to commit yourself."

In a word, is it not obvious to common sense that the church must not attempt, in her authoritative schools, to expound anything which the church is not agreed upon? The only way to avoid this just objection is to include in the seminary's course no *doctrines* except those which the church herself holds as "of the faith," as a part of her established orthodoxy, and no branches of secular knowledge but such as are established and are directly subsidiary to the doctrines. For example, in teaching original sin, as established in the church's code of orthodoxy, the professor of necessity introduces a certain doctrine of *mental science* touching motive and the will. But first, all scholars of all schools have been agreed for ages that this doctrine of theology and this doctrine of psychology, true or false, go together; and second, all Presbyterians are as much agreed in the truth of the latter as they are on the former. Every point of

science merely secular of which this cannot be said must be kept out of the divinity course proper, and we must forbear to *commit the church to it* by teaching it officially in her ecclesiastical schools. Those branches which interest theology, and are still unsettled, should be taught in secular schools, under friendly, though not official, denominational auspices, where at least the *premium minds* of our young ministry may inform themselves profoundly.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

LAY-PREACHING.¹

WHEN a work is exciting the pious enthusiasm of good men it is an invidious task to cry, "*Cave.*" But it may, none the less, be a necessary and imperative duty to utter that *caveat*. No friend of God and man, who witnesses efforts which really result in rescuing sinners from perdition, can fail to approve of that effect, however he may mistrust the mode; and if he permits any pride of class or spirit of party to sway him into condemnation of the former, he is not only weak, but criminal. We may concede, likewise, that it will be very difficult for the dissentient from the new mode so to utter his *caveat* against it as not to appear opposed to the result, in which all good men should concur. Yet the friends of truth may be shut up to attempt that nice distinction. Ministers of the gospel should, of all men, be most humble, and therefore they should be the first to remember that their regular membership in the ecclesiastical *guild* will by no means ensure to them a monopoly of all the skill for its functions. The regular medical faculty has doubtless learned some things from classes whom it stigmatized as quacks. The Thompsonian taught them some things about caloric as a remedial agent, and the homœopathists have made them more sparing of their drugs. The ministry should be discreet, and be taught by such instances not to be too proud to learn from humble laymen the ways of proclaiming God's truth more effectively, if there is anything to be learned from them. The history of Eldad and Medad (Num. xi. 27-30) has not seldom been cited against the clergy, and the modesty of Moses com-

¹ This article appeared in *The Southern Presbyterian Review* for April, 1876, reviewing: 1, *Minutes of Assembly, Southern Presbyterian Church*; 1869. 2, *Narrative of the Awakening*; London: James Nisbet & Co. Pp. 384; large octavo. 3, *The American Evangelists*. By Dr. John Hall and George H. Stuart, Esq. Dodd & Mead. Pp. 455; 12mo. 4, *Addresses and Lectures, with Narrative of Labors of Messrs. Moody and Sankey*. A. D. F. Randolph. Pp. 222; 8vo. 5, *The Work of God in Great Britain*. By Rufus W. Clark, D. D. Harper & Bros. Pp. 371. 6, *Sacred Songs and Solos Sung by Ira D. Sankey*. London: Morgan & Scott. (With Music.)

mended, when he replied: "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets." Although ministers might fairly except to this instance that the two new prophets in the camp of Israel presented, in their inspired *afflatus*, a divine warrant which would, in any age of the church, if it were really manifested, supersede the necessity of regular appointment, but which none in our age can claim either in or out of the ministry; yet they may well regard it as always seemly for them to pay a modest heed to this instance.

Whatever, then, can be learned from eminent lay-preachers, of devotion, simplicity of language and aim, or skill in winning souls, all this the ministry should meekly and thankfully learn. We may note among these timely lessons the following: The success of Mr. Moody in enlisting the popular attention to the gospel should be an impressive illustration of some homiletical truths which our church anxiously seeks to impress on her young ministers, such as these: that preaching to the people should usually be in popular, as opposed to theological, structure; that it is the fundamental truths of the revealed gospel-theology which, above all human speculations and niceties, command the heart of man.¹ This example reminds us, also, that the profane classes of men will never be brought under gospel influences by building churches and inviting them to come to the minister; the minister must go after them. The practical sense of Mr. Moody has also shown him the importance of finding some way by which transient impressions made in public may be promptly followed up with personal inculcation. He has also given us another illustration of that which can never be too often impressed on those who aim to do good—the power of sympathy and sincerity over depraved hearts.

We shall now claim at the hands of our readers credit for our candor in declaring that all assaults upon Mr. Moody's purity of motive and Christian character are as far as possible from our thoughts. In dissenting from a part of his example, we only assert the well known fact, that good men have often made mistakes, which, though not designed, have been hurtful. It seems almost customary now to assert that the unquestionable divine blessing which is claimed to attend the labors of the lay-evangel-

¹ See *Lectures on Sacred Rhetoric*, by R. L. Dabney, Lectures II., VII., XVIII., XX.

ists is God's sanction of their method. This supposed argument has been lately heard from the most respectable as well as the most inconsiderate sources. Plausible as it appears to the pious, it is transparently erroneous. This is patent from a simple question: has not God often blessed the pious efforts of misguided men, not for the sake of, but in spite of, their peculiar errors? The monk Augustine went to Canterbury among the Pagan Saxons, preaching the gospel indeed, but with especial purpose to assert among them the papal supremacy. Did not God largely employ his preaching to Christianize those barbarians? Doubtless. But are we ready to concede that God thereby set the seal of his approval upon the missionary's Romanizing principles? This was, indeed, the stupid and superstitious inference of Augustine; it is not that of any Protestant. Again: John Wesley urged his great evangelistic movement in the especial interest of an Arminian theology and an unscriptural church-government. No Presbyterian grants that the unquestionable success of him and his missionaries in winning souls is God's endorsement of his erroneous principles. A search through our church histories might multiply these instances a hundred-fold.

With these preparatory truths, we wish to remind our readers of a few admitted Scripture facts. Christ, the Head of the church, has himself ordained the mode in which he wills his gospel shall be preached to mankind. He has instituted in the world a visible church, and appointed it to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15.) He has given it, at least in outline, its form, laws and officers, and has enjoined upon it the species of didactic and disciplinary functions it is to perform. He has taught this church that her public organic functions are all to be performed through these officers, whose names and places he has himself assigned. When he was pleased to ordain that "by the foolishness of preaching" those who believe are saved, he provided expressly how the preachers were to be selected and appointed. The qualifications of the men he bestows by the gifts of his providence and grace. The brotherhood recognize the possession of these qualifications by certain *criteria*, which he has caused to be laid down in his word. The existing elders of the church are clothed with the function of trying the qualifications of the new heralds, and, on verifying the presence of those qualities, of clothing them with the office-

power of the ministerial elder. It was thus the highest evangelists were appointed. (Acts xvi. 1-3; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6.) Thus the ordinary ministers of the church are to be perpetuated. (2 Tim. ii. 2.) We thus see that Christ has not left anything to human invention, as to the instrumentality for preaching his gospel; that matter is distinctly settled. It should be enough for the humble Christian that thus Christ has ordained. Hence, we are as sure that Christ's plan is the wisest, as any human experience can make us; we do not need the lessons of church history, so often repeated, where the betterments which man's officious zeal has insisted on making upon Christ's plan have borne their regular fruits of mischief and confusion, to make us content with the ordained method. Amidst all the plausibilities and excitements of the human inventions, we remain quiet in the conviction that *Christ knows best*.

But it is not unprofitable to recur to the practical reasons for this divine ordinance of a regular ordained ministry, preaching officially only as they are commissioned by the church through her presbyterial courts.

Were we Quakers, we could consistently claim an exemption from this law. If all preaching were done like Eldad's and Medad's, by the specific and immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the preacher might consistently claim that he was not dependent upon these practical reasons. But the apostle taught us (1 Cor. xiii. 8), that "prophesyings should fail." The modern evangelist and pastor must preach aright, by the combined assistance of his natural and acquired mental gifts, scriptural knowledge, and spiritual discernment. Hence, the preacher needs all the support, the guidance, and the restraining responsibilities arising out of his official relation to the church, and the church cannot possibly fulfil her grand function of being "the pillar and ground" of the gospel, unless she preserves those official relations and checks with those who preach. She must claim her rights of selection, ordination, and government, over those who preach her gospel, for her own and her Master's sake, as well as for the sake of sustaining and endorsing their message. This point of view gives us a triumphant answer to that flippant argument which asks, What actual effect an ordination ceremony has upon the ordained? "Do gifts and graces," they ask, "emanate from the palms of the ordaining prelate or pres-

byters, and penetrate the skulls or hearts of the candidates? If the truth is preached, what difference can be made by a formal, human appointment of him who preaches it? We answer it makes this difference: in the one case, the hearer has the opinion of one individual fellow-sinner; in the other, he has the judgment of the church of Christ, uttered through her proper organ, that the things uttered are the truths of God. This is a very different position from that of the papist, who claims for the church infallibility, and demands of the hearer an implicit faith; yet it secures to the sinner an important didactic advantage. He can only be saved by the truth, as he has rational assurance that it is from God, and therefore of divine authority. Of that rational conviction the associated testimony of the church, God's appointed witness on earth, is an important element. The minister is, to most of his hearers, personally a stranger; they know nothing as to whether he is a wise and true man or not; but the church he represents is not a stranger; her character and *status* are known. Again: the lay-preacher speaks under no ecclesiastical responsibility; he may present the truth aptly or inaptly, to the edification or the misleading of his hearers; but the church which permits him to preach without her commission cannot curb him. He does not derive his right to speak from her. How can she supervise it, so long as his errors are not flagrant enough to constitute what would be a disciplinable offence in a layman? The Presbyterian Church does not make it a *censurable crime* for a layman to believe that children should not be baptized, that a saint may totally and finally apostatize, that regeneration is synergistic. Then, can she punish one who owes her no other responsibilities than those of a layman for saying what he believes? This view makes it perfectly obvious that *lay-preaching implies broad-churchism*. The church which accepts it as a customary ordinance must, in consistency, fling down her doctrinal standards, and open her doors to latitudinarian doctrine, with all its fearful consequences. Let all Presbyterians, then, bear in mind, as one "fixed fact," that the recognition of lay-preaching *means broad-churchism*. This argument may now be brought within very close and simple limits. Christ ordained that the human heralds of his truth, since they would not be infallible, should preach under strict responsibility to his church. But the lay-preacher, especially the one who merges

his own denominational connection in catholic labors, is under no responsibility to the church. She has no check on his motions. We must add that the concession of the full right of lay-preaching will leave us no guarantee of the preacher's preparation. Christ has declared that particular qualification and preparation are essential. But if the preacher appoints himself, how is this requirement to be enforced? The impulse to preach, of course, implies the subject's conviction of his own fitness, and he "is judge in his own case." There is no safeguard left.

The momentous nature of this consequence is not apprehended until we remember that such lay-evangelists as Messrs. Moody and Sankey are destined to have many imitators. It might be well for the church could we be guaranteed that all those who are to come after will be as sound and scriptural as the distinguished leaders. But we have no right to anticipate any other result than this: that these imitators will be of all kinds, "good, bad, and indifferent." If the journals may be believed, our prophecy is already fulfilling in some who are aping Mr. Moody's *role*. But when we are infested with that harvest of rashness, indiscretion, bad taste, heresy, and intrusion, which is to come from this sowing, we shall understand why the Head of the church imposed official responsibilities, in addition to the lay, upon those who publicly preach his gospel.

We are perfectly aware of the retort which awaits us, that the church court is no more infallible than the lay-preachers. We shall be told that the preacher's keeper needs keeping as much as he does. But the reply to this is in the principle which Solomon announces in the words, "In the multitude of counsellors is safety." The error or apostasy of the many is far less probable than that of the one; the aggregate wisdom of the many is far greater than that of the one. All legitimate governments are but specimens of the wisdom of divine Providence in so combining men in society as to make them checks upon each other. Church government contains the same useful and beneficent feature. And we repeat that it should be enough for us that this is the method which Christ, in his divine wisdom, has actually adopted to repress the disorders of erratic, individual minds and wills in his kingdom on earth. If the objection meant no more than that this method will also come short of yielding perfect results, we

should freely concede it. No plan, though devised by divine wisdom, will ever work perfection when intrusted to human hands, for these are at best imperfect. But shall we, therefore, disclaim the safeguards which that wisdom has devised to protect us from total and disastrous failure?

But to our Assembly of 1869 there appeared to be another side to this subject. That body looked abroad upon the vast destitutions of the country, and then observed the lamentable masses of buried talents in the laity of the church. It seemed to ask itself why this latent talent should not be at once directed to attack these vast destitutions everywhere, and without the formality of professional training. Thus it was prompted to adopt the ambiguous action which authorized church sessions to license, in a sense, elders and laymen who should be virtually lay-preachers, and yet, in some sort, ecclesiastical officers of the church. To us it always appeared that the Assembly should not have gone thus far, or else should have gone farther. The only kind of preacher, not an ordained minister and administrator of the sacraments, known to our constitution is the "probationer." The only court which can lawfully license him is the Presbytery; and he can only be licensed lawfully after a certain prescribed preparation. But these sessional *appointees* were preachers, and yet not probationers. If the Assembly judged it right to direct lay effort into public channels, it would have been less inconsistent and illegal simply to invite laymen (and elders) to exercise their gifts publicly, without waiting for formal authority from any church court. That is to say, it would have been better for the Assembly to hold and teach that these extra-constitutional public exercises of individual gifts, while encouraged by the brotherhood, must yet be held as authorized by the personal rights of private members, as Christ's freemen, and not by any official appointment. Or if the Assembly felt the intrinsic looseness of this footing for the exercise—as Presbyterians could not but feel—and yet desired to encourage this species of public labor, it should have gone farther, and changed the constitution, so as to provide for sessional "licentiates," who should not be "probationers," nor trained for the ministry, and yet regular ecclesiastical officers. It is fortunate for the integrity of our system and the peace of our churches, that the instincts of good sense in our people have left this legislation practically a dead

letter. So may it remain until the "sober second thought" of the Assembly shall revoke it.

But yet, pious zeal urges us with such thoughts as these: There is, notoriously, high qualification for usefulness outside of the ordained ministry; why not let it act, when the world is perishing? The truest wisdom is to give free scope for all good energies. And then, has not Christ made every believer a teacher of his lost fellow-men, leaving it as the last enactment entered upon the pages of the New Testament, "*Let him that heareth say, Come?*" (Rev. xxii. 17.) Thus, it is the very condition of every Christian's life, that he shall, somehow or somewhere, speak to others for Christ. Now, if, by speaking for Christ to one fellow-creature, a believer ascertains that he can edify two, where is the difference in principle? Is it not twice as well? And if he may properly speak to two, why not to twenty, or to two hundred, or to two thousand? And if God blesses his speaking in the awakening, renewal, or edification of souls, how can any good man dare to arrest the blessing for the sake of a human ordinance which is lacking to the speaker?

This is plausible; yet the reconciliation is not difficult. We remind the pious advocate of this liberty, that ordination is not a "human ordinance," in the sense of his argument, *but a divine one*. Christ enjoins it; only he enjoins man to perform it. When amiable enthusiasm asks of us whether we expect divine grace to "run in our ruts," we fearlessly reply—abating the homeliness of the image—that we do expect it to move in channels which Christ has assigned for it; and if we have these, then we are entitled to expect that Christ will honor his own institution. The solution of the objection is found, secondly, in the fact that, this side of the official heralding of the gospel by the word and sacraments, there is a wide and diversified field for lay effort, extending from the teaching of the child at its parent's knee, up to the school and the Bible class. But, third, if this lay effort develops in any male Christian real qualification for more public usefulness than all this field can offer him, *this is one element of his call to the regular ministry*; and with the seal of success added, it is the crowning and decisive element. As a devout and faithful believer, he is bound to accept the sign as meaning this. The "aptness to teach," "good report with them that are without," and other traits which constitute him a suc-

cessful lay-preacher, are precisely those which Christ has laid down as designating those whom he calls into the ministry. That regular ministry, ordained in the regular ecclesiastical mode, is precisely the agency which he has appointed to do the preaching. Hence the case is perfectly clear. If the man is mistaken in supposing he has the gifts for lay-preaching, he should be stopped. If he really has them, then Christ thereby calls him into the regular ministry, either as a pastor or evangelist. How else can any man be more clearly called than by just the gifts and successes which are claimed for these evangelists by their friends? If they may refuse to heed, we see not how any other man can be more bound to come into the ministry. If love and duty to Christ prompt them to preach as laymen, we see not how the same affections can fail to draw them into the ministry. If, for instance, such laymen as the late Mr. Brownlow North and Mr. Moody have the qualifications and the seal of the divine blessing which their friends claim for them, this is, to our mind, a demonstration that God calls them into the regular ministry, and they should seek a regular ordination like other ministers, each in that branch of the church which has his conscientious preference.

This, then, should be the solution of the impulse to lay-preaching. The consistent application of this solution would not imply the refusal of all liberty to the exercise. The ecclesiastical authorities would permit a tentative use of the gifts of laymen in this way. But they would require that each case should, before very long, find its appropriate issue, either by passing on into the regular ministry, or by such practical evidence of the lack of ability to edify as would justify the church court in withdrawing the exceptional privilege. If the possession of gifts were evinced without the learning and culture which the church rightfully requires as necessary to the highest ministerial efficiency, then the same honest zeal which prompts the aspirant to serve God in public should surely prompt him to submit to that training by study which will equip him for serving God effectually and wisely in public.

Now, the evasions which will be attempted from this plain reasoning are, first, that the lay-evangelist honestly believes he can do more good thus than if ordained. This plea deserves no more answer than has been already intimated. We presume that

God knows best, and he has called the preachers into the ministry. Another plea is, that the irreligious will listen with more sympathy and confidence to one who is not paid for his preaching. Again we retort, we presume that the God who "ordained that they who serve the altar should live of the altar" knows best. If the regular ministry is indeed mercenary, then the proper remedy is to correct the fault by rigid church discipline, to extrude the mercenary men, if necessary, from the office they disgrace, and to fill it with regular ministers of a Moody's generous devotion. If the profession is not obnoxious to this suspicion, then we opine that to truckle to the hostile, infidel prejudice, which wickedly defames a noble and disinterested order of men, is but a sorry way to promote the interests of truth and righteousness. A third and more respectable plea remains, that there are gifted elders, who are prevented by the duties already owed to dependent families, or by the *res anguste domi*, from making their way into the regular ministry, but who are admirably qualified to do good by public discourse. The aspirations of this class deserve the most generous sympathy of every good heart. The true solution which ought to be applied to their cases should be assistance from the brotherhood, so unstinted that it would meet all domestic obstacles and open up a happy road for these yearning souls into the full work of God, by supplying the wants of those dependent on them while they are preparing for the higher sphere. But suppose this solution is not given, then it might be a more harmless irregularity, if there must be any, for these gifted elders to continue to speak in public, with due prudence and modesty, *by virtue of their ordination as elders*, than to resort to a species of licensure as preachers from a court which has no constitutional right to give it. Believing assuredly, as we do, that the ruling elder is a presbyter, a member of that order of which "aptness to teach" is required in general terms, we would rather see the zeal and gifts of non-clerical laborers expand themselves in elders'-preaching than in lay-preaching. For the former exercise would possess the all-important advantage that it was performed under official sanctions and responsibilities.

There are heedless thinkers, who call themselves "practical," who suppose they find an answer to all cautions and every plea of principle in the triumphant question, "How many regularly

ordained ministers preach as well or with as much success as Mr. Moody?" Possibly few or none. Any admission we might make on this point is wholly irrelevant to the argument. For the "practical" Christian will not defy God's word by denying that study and sacred learning give some advantage for expounding Christianity, or that the church institutions Christ has ordained have some utility for promoting the great work of the world's redemption. Now, we remind them that Christ requires all of us to love him with all our hearts, and serve him with all our strength. The thing which Christ demands from a Christian of eminent natural gifts and zeal, is not merely that he shall love and serve God better than we poor, plodding "professionals," but that he shall serve him as well as he can. If his natural gifts, unassisted by ministerial training and sanctions, enable him already to surpass us, that is not the question. The question is, whether the gifted layman, with this training and ordination, might not surpass us a great deal farther in glorifying God? If he might, then he is solemnly bound to do it; and thus he is bound to make these professional acquisitions which confer that fuller efficiency.

It is from this point of view that we would proceed to what is the most distasteful part of our task—and yet a part required by fidelity to truth—the criticism of Mr. Moody's actual method of preaching the gospel. Let it be, then, distinctly borne in mind, that we do not complain that his preaching is not good, but that it is not better. We do not charge upon it fatal error, or any criminal unfaithfulness to truth; but we assert that it presents blemishes enough to offer precisely the proof that might be expected of the necessity of regular training to him who undertakes to preach the gospel. Mr. Moody's preaching is correct enough to evince great promise, and great knowledge of the English Scriptures; but it is not correct enough to evince that he, more than any other man, can adequately instruct the church of God without the regular training. The point which we claim, after conceding all his eminent merits, is, that here again we have the experimental evidence, the more conclusive because it is found in so eminent an instance, to prove that no man should preach who has not had the advantages of preparation and regular appointment.

We hear Mr. Moody, for instance, telling the Christians of

Edinburgh, in January, 1874, it was "his belief that God punishes believers in this life for their transgressions, while the punishment of unbelievers was reserved for a future state." The natural construction of this sentence would, of course, give the same meaning to the word "punishment" in its two members. Were Mr. Moody's attention challenged to this grave error, he would probably claim that he knew the wide difference between chastisement (of justified believers) and punishment (of condemned sinners). But our objection is, that his language teaches the ignorant to confound that distinction.

In a sermon delivered in London, he divides his hearers into three classes: Christians; those who have wandered from God, or backsliders; and "those that never have been saved." This distribution seems to imply, that the second class are not Christians now, but were once saved. Yet Mr. Moody is a declared believer in the perseverance of saints.

Again, he paints in colors of the warmest approval the conversion of a bereaved father, who professes no motive for desiring salvation or heaven except the certainty that only by reaching that state and place could he again enjoy the society of a favorite and engaging child, who had died in early youth. And this conviction was the result of a vivid dream only! How dangerous may not this delusion be, which thus encourages impulsive minds to confound the yearnings of an affection merely natural, and shared by myriads of hearts utterly carnal and impenitent, with spiritual-mindedness.

In a sermon on the new birth, he describes the domestic peace and happiness which have returned to the hearth of a reformed drunkard, who is the father of a family, and exclaims: "Yes, God has done all that; and that is regeneration." Would it not have been safer to say, "That is one of the fruits of regeneration," lest some vicious man might adopt, from his words, the soul-destroying error that reformation is regeneration? In the same sermon he describes Nicodemus, whose history gives him his text, as "belonging to the house of bishops"; "one of the church dignitaries"; "one who now would doubtless be a D. D. and LL. D." There is here, perhaps, a very fair hit at the two unfortunate classes among the moderns designated by these titles, but we perceive also a rather confused view, for a religious teacher, of the duties of the Jewish Sanhedrim.

In the sermon on the word "gospel," he repudiates the kindly intercessory petition of a brother, that he—Moody—"might lay hold of eternal life." He declares that, having gotten this gift at his conversion, nineteen years before, he has no use for this prayer. Does not this savor a little of the unscriptural extravagance of the Plymouth Brethren? They deem it an absurdity to pray for the Holy Ghost, because, they argue, every man who has faith to pray, has the Holy Ghost already. Such teachers forget that Bible saints, whose title to an assurance of a gracious state is at least as sound as that of any modern Christian, do continually pray for life and for the Holy Ghost, and do expressly exhort each other to "lay hold on eternal life." They forget that rudimental truth of Christian experience, that breathings after spiritual blessings are the very acts of soul in which the possession of spiritual gifts finds its normal expression.

In the same sermon a desire for eternal life is unhesitatingly ascribed to every person in a vast congregation of impenitent persons; and "eternal life," that which is the great gift of the gospel, is described and illustrated as merely the endless prolongation of that natural life to which any worldly man would cleave in the prospect of natural death, even at the cost of his wealth. The argument by which this multitude, dead in trespasses and sins, are assured that they all really have a supreme desire for "eternal life" is simply this. Suppose any one of them were in the condition of a rich man with a million sterling, in a sinking ship in mid-ocean, who offered to give all this wealth to save his life from drowning, would he not do the same? Of course. Well, then, he supremely desires eternal life, and as the heavenly Father stands yearning to bestow it on everybody, everybody may get it on these terms. Thus "slightly is the hurt of the daughter of the people healed." Yet Mr. Moody would promptly accede to those Scripture statements which describe all unbelievers as carnal and dead to every spiritual desire. The slightest discrimination should have saved him from this dangerous confusion of that natural love of existence which every vilest sinner feels, and feels all the more pungently by reason of his guilty remorse and fear, with the desire for that true life which is a "hungering and thirsting after righteousness." It is to the latter only that the gospel-promise is made, and the real misery and

sin of every unbeliever's state is that of this desire he *does not feel* a single pulse, and never will, save as the Holy Ghost quickens his dead soul.

And here a solemn protest should be uttered against this trait which pervades much of the preaching of Mr. Moody and his admirers, that tends so strongly to betray the partially-awakened sinner into a "temporary faith." These teachers regard the inviting features of the gospel as far the most persuasive. Hence they are not thorough in probing the corruptions of dead souls with the instrument of God's holy law. They wish to make coming to Christ very easy. Hence they continually speak to wicked men as though all that is needed is to gratify the natural desire for well-being and impunity. They are so eager to induct their pupils into the joys of a full assurance that they tacitly pass over that careful self-examination and the self-distrust implied therein, which alone can safely discriminate, as assisted by the witnessing of the Spirit, between a spurious and a genuine faith. They abound in soft and sensuous pictures of the believer's life and of heaven, as smiling with enjoyments and security. Thus, in his sermon on the great commission, Mr. Moody tells sinners expressly, "Let me say—mark the words—God does not come here and ask any man to give up anything." Is it possible for a religious teacher to fly more directly into the face of his Master? We remember that Christ said, in Luke xiv., except a man gives up *everything*, he cannot be his disciple. It is true that the preacher explains his declaration by promising his hearers that their cases shall be all like his; in that the reception of a free salvation through Christ's blood, in his own case, immediately made the crucifixion of his sins perfectly easy. We feel no disposition to test the accuracy of Mr. Moody's own peculiarly happy experience. But this we do know, that if his experience has been thus singular, he has no right to promise a similar one to other believers; Christ never did. The teaching which we hear from him is after this fashion: that the denial of our lusts for his sake ought not to be difficult, and were holiness complete in us, would not be; that, therefore, redeemed sinners, in their militant state, are bound in duty to practice that self-denial manfully, whether they find it more or less bitter, that, by reason of indwelling sin, they will find it more or less bitter, but that his grace will assuredly give them prevalent consolation and final

victory in this death-struggle, if they cleave to him by faith. Such is the amount of encouragement upon which Christ invites the soul that is awakened to the "sinfulness of sin," and animated by the "godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto life," to enter upon the Christian warfare by trust in his love and grace. To the truly humbled and renewed soul it is glorious, sweet and sufficient; to the mere stony-ground hearer it is but a sapless promise. What he desires is a gospel of easy impunity, selfish advantage and luxurious sentiment. But we warn those who preach the gospel thus that they must expect their converts to fulfil the prophecy, "When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by they are offended."

The sermons since preached in America betray similar inaccuracies. At Northfield, Mass., Mr. Moody tells us "Paul's letter on election was written to the church, and not to the world." First, we ask, which is Paul's "letter on election," the Epistle to the Romans, or Ephesians, or those to Timothy? The intelligent reader finds election in all his epistles, as well as in Christ's sermons. And next, we see no evidence that the holy apostle restricted his teachings of this doctrine to believers; certainly Rom. ix. 20 does not wear this appearance. Again at Northfield, commenting on Matt. vii. 7, he teaches his hearers that the "asking Christian" is a lower grade, the "seeking Christian" a higher, and the "knocking" the highest and best grade; the last being most assured of an answer to prayer. But our Saviour, in the next verse, proceeds to give the very same promise to all three, thus showing that he did not mean to distribute praying people into gradations by this language, but to reinforce the encouragement given to all praying people in common by an emphatic repetition. It is a far graver error that he evidently confounds the two classes of objects of prayer and promises of answer given in the gospel. He speaks as though Christians had the same specific warrant to pray for objects of problematical benefit (yet naturally and innocently desirable to the pious heart), as for the benefits of redemption expressly pledged to faith in the promises. This heedlessness tends to encourage believers who are more ardent than well-informed to push their faith into presumption. The wretched result will be, when they are refuted by a final disappointment, that they will infer either their own rejection by God, and thus

fall into profound discouragement, or a skeptical doubt of God's faithfulness. This error and its dangers has been fully explicated in a former number of this *Review*,¹ and we therefore dismiss it with a reference to that discussion.

The reporters have doubtless done that kindly office for Mr. Moody, in preparing his speeches for the journals, which they are wont to render to other extempore orators. Enough remains, however, in defects of grammar and style to make every cultivated Christian feel that training for the ministry would not have hurt the preacher. The bad grammar and the provincialisms which bristle over his discourses are not the worst blemishes. An English wit has drawn an amusing picture of a lady of the old-fashioned high-breeding, who was intensely anxious to rebuke in her son a certain fashion of speech, and who yet could not bring herself so far within that guilty fashion as to pronounce the unseemly—though only—word which characterized it—"slang." We labor under a similar embarrassment in doing our duty on this point to Mr. Moody. We can only protest that we do not believe even a coal-heaver or sailor finds the infusion of this element, in addition to all that simplicity, perspicuity, earnestness and affection can do, essential to his edification.

There are two more points in this movement which require a word of caution. One is the absolute importance attached by the lay-evangelists to the undenominational quality of all their measures. The point to be remarked is not that their services are "union meetings," or that the evangelists deem it expedient sometimes to subordinate their own denominational convictions for the temporary purposes of wider Christian communion. The most decided and consistent ministers have done this. But the point is, that the leaders of the new movement make not only the subordination, but the suppression, of their own and of all other people's denominational convictions, even the most conscientious, an absolute requirement of the success of their work, and that not occasionally, but uniformly. When Mr. Moody was asked, in London, to what branch of the church he belonged, the only answer he would give was, "that he belonged to the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." When a young person honestly asked him, in Edinburgh, to instruct her conscience as to the proper

¹January, 1872. "Theology of the Plymouth Brethren," Vol. I., p. 169.

mode of baptism, he positively refused, and required her to satisfy herself with some views as to the significance of baptism. These must have been most inconsistently "sectarian," inasmuch as immersionists differ from us as much about the significance as the mode of this sacrament. In a lecture at Dublin, Mr. Moody's two chief topics were "*drunkenness and sectarianism.*" "God had vouchsafed a blessed unity; woe to the unhappy person who should first break it. Yet it would be broken if there was proselytism. This would be the triumph of sect over Christ. The cry is, 'Come out, come out from a sect.' But where? Into another sect? Every body of believers is a sect."

There are several remarks which will serve to set this claim in its proper light. It is almost self-evident that he who would coöperate in a work thoroughly undenominational with members of several denominations, must expurgate his teachings of everything which might impinge upon either of his friends' peculiarities. Now the evangelist, who is at once competent and honest, must be supposed to have adopted for himself, either from the standards of some denomination or from his own original studies in Scripture, a *system* of revealed doctrine which he conscientiously believes to have correctness and a certain completeness. If private members were justly blamed by the apostles, in Heb. v. 12, because they had not advanced beyond "the first principles of the oracles of Christ," such a state of knowledge is, of course, unpardonable in one who assumes to teach multitudes. But this teacher must now clip off one truth at one corner of his own system, in concession to his Methodist ally; another for the Immersionist; another for the Episcopalian; another for the Romanist. He will plead, "Yet the fundamentals of saving truth remain." We reply, Possibly. But yet, dares he assert that a maimed system of truth will be as efficacious as a complete one? Is any divine truth valueless? Is the faithful soldier as willing to fight for his king with a sword which has large gaps on its edge, and has lost its point, perchance, as with a perfect blade? A good man, as we conceded, may consent to a temporary silence concerning a peculiar truth which he believes to be God's truth, for the sake of other righteous objects of wider Christian communion. He may concur in a Bible society effort with Quakers, Papists, and even Socinians; but to consent to a constant silence is dishonest and unfaithful

In the second place, the great proximate end of the church is the redemption of souls. If undenominational teaching is so much the more efficient for this end, it seems very evident that denominations ought not to exist in the church at all. That is to say, the church ought to have an absolute visible unity, as Rome claims. Then, first, the church must either have an earthly infallible head, to settle and suppress all doctrinal differences, as Rome claims; or secondly, this catholic church must be a "broad church," wholly latitudinarian as to doctrine outside of the bare fundamentals of saving truth; or thirdly, some Christians must be forced to surrender a part of their fundamental convictions to other Christians no more conscientious or infallible than themselves.

In the third place, this exalting of the union effort as the only efficient mode to build up Christ's kingdom, and this denunciation of denominationalism as an obstruction to good in revival meetings, contain a very plain implication that denominations are wicked things. The inevitable effect will be, that a generation of Christians will be educated opposed to all denominational distinctions. Then there will be but three possible resorts for these Christians—popery, or broad churchism, or the renunciation of the visible church in every form. This is the lesson which divine providence has taught to Christendom by the struggles of eighteen hundred years, and especially by the agonies and blood of the Protestant Reformation; the existence of the visible church catholic in branches or denominations, each conscientiously teaching the whole counsel of God for man's salvation, as it honestly understands it from the Scriptures, yet each respecting the sincerity and the church rights of the others, is the only condition possible for the existence of orthodox Protestantism—on the one hand, not persecuting, and on the other hand, not dishonestly latitudinarian—in such a world as ours. Such, we solemnly testify, is the lesson of God's providence as of sound reasoning. Let the reader scan the grounds of this conclusion again and again; he will find them adamant. It will be a calamitous day for truth and for immortal souls when the novelties of a restless and conceited age shall persuade us to cast away this costly truth.

Let a more popular *ad hominem* argument be applied to Mr. Moody. He is, we will suppose for the argument's sake, an

immersionist. His own denominational connection is with that church. Now, either he believes that there is some value in the argument for that mode of baptism, or that there is not. If there is none, why is he himself an immersionist? If there is some value in that mode, then he is bound in honesty to seek that advantage for his converts also. Why should a good man be willing to leave others deprived of that scriptural means of blessing which has done his own soul good? ¹

We conclude with a word touching the office of Mr. Sankey, "singing the gospel." The Jewish temple service had its chief singer. It will be a curious result if this modern movement should develop this function into a new and prominent branch of the ministry unauthorized by the New Testament. Singing is unquestionably a scriptural means of grace, and good singing is a very efficient one. But in order that the church may retain the blessing of good singing, the privilege which Mr. Sankey and his imitators claim, of importing their own lyrics into God's worship, must be closely watched. That saying has been quoted in favor of Mr. Sankey's "ministry of song," which has been assigned to Lord Macaulay and to Sir W. Scott, and to Thomas Moore, "Let me make the ballads of a people, and I care not who makes their laws." We cite that very principle to condemn the approaching license of so-called sacred song. Dr. Nettleton was wont to say that he could cause a company of people to "sing themselves into the doctrines of the gospel more easily than he could preach them into it." Then it is even more important that church courts should use their authority of deciding what shall be sung than of securing the qualification and orthodoxy of its preachers. Dr. Nettleton took the liberty of compiling and using his "Village Hymns" in public worship. His learning, sanctified genius and experience excused the act in him. If the same license is to be usurped by every self-appointed chorister, we shall in the end have a mass of corrupting religious poetry against which the church will have to wage a sore contest. Our children will then learn, to their cost, how

¹ We are not alone in foreseeing the disorganizing consequences of this self-appointment of evangelists. Dr. Thos. H. Skinner, of Cincinnati, has clearly demonstrated the same point in a pamphlet upon "Lay-Evangelism," of unrivalled manliness and vigor, in which he fortifies the inferences of good sense by the lessons of experience borrowed from the Congregational, the Scotch, and the Presbyterian Churches.

legitimate and valuable was that restriction which we formerly saw in the lyrical liturgies of the old Protestant churches, expressed by the *imprimatur* of their supreme courts, "*Appointed to be sung in churches.*" The most that can be said of Mr. Sankey's developments in this direction is, that they do not appear to have introduced positive error as yet, and that they exhibit no worse traits than a marked inferiority of matter and style to the established hymnals of the leading churches. The most danger thus far apparent is that of habituating the taste of Christians to a very rapid species of pious doggerel, containing the most diluted possible traces of saving truth, in portions suitable to the most infantile faculties supplemented with a jingle of "vain repetitions." What shall we gain by giving our people these ephemeral rhymes in place of the immortal lyrics of Moses, David, Isaiah, Watts, and Cowper, so grand in their rhythm and melody, so pure in taste, and above all, so freighted with compact and luminous truth? "The old wine is better."

Intelligent Christians will watch the results of these mammoth meetings with interest, that "by their fruits we may know them." It is probably impossible to eliminate the chaff from the wheat as yet in the reported results in Great Britain. No one is competent to decide how much of the apparent enthusiasm was due to curiosity, to animal sympathy, to a species of religious fashion and social furor, to the impressive *stimulus* of vast multitudes singing or agitated with a common impulse, and how much to divine truth and sanctifying grace. We have seen the London press, with Mr. Spurgeon, after six months' experience, pronouncing the successes in that city delusive. It is very apparent that the supporters of the effort in Brooklyn were disappointed, though loth to confess their failure. We incline to the conclusion that this method, with its monster congregations and extraordinary incidents, is mistaken; that it will prove a waste of money and labor as compared with the more humble and unobtrusive, but permanently fruitful, work of parochial laborers, and that it will be found more promotive of an unwholesome religious dissipation than of holy living.

THE PUBLIC PREACHING OF WOMEN.¹

IN this day innovations march with rapid strides. The fantastic suggestion of yesterday, entertained only by a few fanatics, and then only mentioned by the sober to be ridiculed, is to-day the audacious reform, and will be to-morrow the recognized usage. Novelties are so numerous and so wild and rash, that in even conservative minds the sensibility of wonder is exhausted and the instinct of righteous resistance fatigued. A few years ago the public preaching of women was universally condemned among all conservative denominations of Christians, and, indeed, within their bounds, was totally unknown. Now the innovation is brought face to face even with the Southern churches, and female preachers are knocking at our doors. We are told that already public opinion is so truckling before the boldness and plausibility of their claims that ministers of our own communion begin to hesitate, and men hardly know whether they have the moral courage to adhere to the right. These remarks show that a discussion of woman's proper place in Christian society is again timely.

The arguments advanced by those who profess reverence for the Bible, in favor of this unscriptural usage, must be of course chiefly rationalistic. They do indeed profess to appeal to the sacred history of the prophetesses, Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Anna, as proving that sex was no sufficient barrier to public work in the church. But the fatal answer is, that these holy women were inspired. Their call was exceptional and supernatural. There can be no fair reasoning from the exception to the ordinary rule. Elijah, in his civic relation to the kingdom of the ten tribes, would have been but a private citizen without his prophetic *afflatus*. By virtue of this we find him exercising the highest of the regal functions (1 Kings xviii.), administering the capital penalty ordained by the law against seducers into idolatry, when he sentenced the priests of Baal and ordered their

¹ Appeared in *The Southern Presbyterian Review* for October, 1879.

execution. But it would be a most dangerous inference to argue hence, that any other private citizen, if moved by pious zeal, might usurp the punitive functions of the public magistrate. It is equally bad logic to infer that because Deborah prophesied when the supernatural impulse of the Spirit moved her, therefore any other pious woman who feels only the impulses of ordinary grace may usurp the function of the public preacher. It must be remembered, besides, that all who claim a supernatural inspiration must stand prepared to prove it by supernatural works. If any of our preaching women will work a genuine miracle, then, and not until then, will she be entitled to stand on the ground of Deborah or Anna.

A feeble attempt is made to find an implied recognition of the right of women to preach in 1 Cor. xi. 5: "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." They would fain find here the implication that the woman who feels the call may prophesy in public, if she does so with a bonnet on her head; and that the apostle provides for admitting so much. But when we turn to the fourteenth chapter, verses 34, 35, we find the same apostle strictly forbidding public preaching in the churches to women, and enjoining silence. No honest reader of Scripture can infer that he meant by inference to allow the very thing which, in the same epistle and in the same part of it, he expressly prohibits. It is a criminal violence to represent him as thus contradicting himself. He did not mean, in chapter xi. 5, to imply that any woman might ever preach in public, either with bonnet on or off. The learned Dr. Gill, followed by many more recent expositors, supposes that in this place the word "prophesy" only means "praise," as it unquestionably does in some places (as in 1 Chron. xxv. 2, the sons of Asaph and Jeduthun "prophesied with the harp"), and as the Targums render it in many places in the Old Testament. Thus, the ordinance of worship which the apostle is regulating just here is not public preaching at all, but the sacred singing of psalms. And all that is here settled is, that Christian females, whose privilege it is to join in this praise, must not do so with unveiled heads, in imitation of some pagan priestesses when conducting their unclean or lascivious worship, but must sing God's public praises with heads modestly veiled.

We have no need to resort to this explanation, reasonable though it be. The apostle is about to prepare the way for his categorical exclusion of women from public discourse. He does so by alluding to the intrusion which had probably begun, along with many other disorders in the Corinthian churches, and by pointing to its obvious unnaturalness. Thus he who stands up in public as the herald and representative of heaven's King must stand with uncovered head; the honor of the Sovereign for whom he speaks demands this. But no woman can present herself in public with uncovered head without sinning against nature and her sex. Hence no woman can be a public herald of Christ. Thus this passage, instead of implying the admission, really argues the necessary exclusion of women from the pulpit.

But the rationalistic arguments are more numerous and are urged with more confidence. First in natural order is the plea that some Christian women are admitted to possess every gift claimed by males, zeal, learning, piety, power of utterance, and it is asked why these are not qualifications for the ministry in the case of the woman as well as of the man. It is urged that there is a mischievous, and even a cruel impolicy, in depriving the church of the accessions and souls of the good which these gifts and graces might procure when exercised in the pulpit. Again, some profess that they have felt the spiritual and conscientious impulse to proclaim the gospel which crowns God's call to the ministry. They "must obey God rather than men," and they warn us against opposing their impulse, lest haply we be "found even to fight against God." They argue that the apostle himself has told us, in the new creation of grace "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." In Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Col. iii. 11; Gal. iii. 28). But if the spiritual kingdom thus levels all social and temporal distinctions, its official rights should equally be distributed in disregard of them all. And last, it is claimed that God has decided the question by setting the seal of his favor on the preaching of some blessed women, such as the "Friend," Miss Sarah Smiley. If the results of her ministry are not gracious, then all the fruits of the gospel may as reasonably be discredited. And they ask triumphantly,

Would God employ and honor an agency which he himself makes unlawful?

We reply, Yes. This confident argument is founded on a very transparent mistake. God does not indeed honor, but he does employ, agents whom he disapproves. Surely God does not approve a man who "preaches Christ for envy and strife" (Phil. i. 15), yet the apostle rejoices in it, and "knows that it shall result in salvation through his prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Two very simple truths, which no believer disputes, explode the whole force of this appeal to results. One is that a truly good person may go wrong in one particular, and our heavenly Father, who is exceedingly forbearing, may withhold his displeasure from the misguided efforts of his child, through Christ's intercession, because, though misguided, he is his child. The other is, that it is one of God's clearest and most blessed prerogatives to bring good out of evil. Thus who can doubt but it is wrong for a man dead in sins to intrude into the sacred ministry? Yet God has often employed such sinners to convert souls; not sanctioning their profane intrusion, but glorifying his own grace by overruling it. This experimental plea may be also refuted by another answer. If the rightfulness of actions is to be determined by their results, then it ought evidently to be by their whole results. But who is competent to say whether the whole results of one of these pious disorders will be beneficial or mischievous? A zealous female converts or confirms several souls by her preaching. Grant it. But may she not, by this example, in the future introduce an amount of confusion, intrusion, strife, error and scandal which will greatly outweigh the first partial good? This question cannot be answered until time is ended, and it will require an omniscient mind to judge it. Thus it becomes perfectly clear that present seeming good results cannot ever be a sufficient justification of conduct which violates the rule of the word. This is our only sure guide. Bad results, following a course of action not commanded in the word, may present a sufficient, even an imperative, reason for stopping, and good results following such action may suggest some probability in its favor. This is all a finite mind is authorized to argue in these matters of God's service, and when the course of action transgresses the commandment such probability becomes worthless.

Pursuing the arguments of the opposite party in the reverse order, we remark next, that when the apostle teaches the equality of all in the privilege of redemption, it is obvious he is speaking in general, not of official positions in the visible church, but of access to Christ and participation in his blessings. The expository ground of this construction is, that thus alone can we save him from self-contradiction. For his exclusion of women from the pulpit is as clear and emphatic as his assertion of the universal equality in Christ. Surely he does not mean to contradict himself. Our construction is established also by other instances of a similar kind. The apostle expressly excludes "neophytes" from office. Yet no one dreams that he would have made the recency of their engrafting a ground of discrimination against their equal privileges in Christ. Doubtless the apostle would have been as ready to assert that in Christ there is neither young nor old, as that in him there is neither male nor female. So every sane man would exclude children from office in the church, yet no one would disparage their equal interest in Christ. So the apostle inhibited Christians who were implicated in polygamy from office, however sincere their repentance. So the canons of the early church forbade slaves to be ordained until they had legally procured emancipation; and doubtless they were right in this rule. But in Christ there is "neither bond nor free." If, then, the equality of these classes in Christ did not imply their fitness for public office in the church, neither does the equality of females with males in Christ imply it. Last, the scope of the apostle in these places proves that he meant no more, for his object in referring to this blessed Christian equality is there seen to be to infer that all classes have a right to church membership, if believers, and that Christian love and communion ought to embrace all.

When the claim is made that the church must concede the ministerial function to the Christian woman who sincerely supposes she feels the call to it, we have a perilous perversion of the true doctrine of vocation. True, this vocation is spiritual, but it is also scriptural. The same Spirit who really calls the true minister also dictated the Holy Scriptures. When even a good man says that *he thinks* the Spirit calls him to preach, there may be room for doubt; but there can be no doubt whatever that the Spirit calls no person to do what the word dic-

tated by him, forbids. The Spirit cannot contradict himself. No human being is entitled to advance a specific call of the Spirit for him individually to do or teach something contrary to or beside the Scriptures previously given to the church, unless he can sustain his claim by miracle. Again, the true doctrine of vocation is that the man whom God has designed and qualified to preach learns his call through the word. The word is the instrument by which the Spirit teaches him, with prayer, that he is to preach. Hence, when a person professes to have felt this call whom the word distinctly precludes from the work, as the neophyte, the child, the penitent polygamist, the female, although we may ascribe her mistake to an amiable zeal, yet we absolutely know she is mistaken; she has confounded a human impulse with the Spirit's vocation. Last, the scriptural vocation comes not only through the heart of the candidate, but of the brotherhood, and the call is never complete until the believing choice of the brethren has confirmed it. But by what shall they be guided? By the "say so" of any one who assumes to be sincere? Nay, verily. The brethren are expressly commanded "not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they are of God." They have no other rule than Scripture. Who can believe that God's Spirit is the agent of such anarchy as this, where the brotherhood hold in their hands the word, teaching them that God does not call any woman, and yet a woman insists against them that God calls her? He "is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." It is on this very subject of vocation to public teaching that the apostle makes this declaration.

The argument from the seeming fitness of some women, by their gifts and graces, to edify the churches by preaching, is then merely utilitarian and unbelieving. When God endows a woman as he did Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, it may be safely assumed that he has some wise end in view; he has some sphere in earth or heaven in which her gifts will come into proper play. But surely it is far from reverent for the creature to decide, against God's word, that this sphere is the pulpit. His wisdom is better than man's. The sin involves the presumption of Uzzah. He was right in thinking that it would be a bad thing to have the sacred ark tumbled into the dust, and in thinking that he had as much physical power to steady it and as much accidental

proximity as any Levite of them all; but he was wrong in presuming to serve God in a way he had said he did not choose to be served. So when men lament the "unemployed spiritual power," which they suppose exists in many gifted females, as a dead loss to the church, they are reasoning with Uzzah; they are presumptuously setting the human wisdom above God's wisdom.

The argument, then, whether any woman may be a public preacher of the word should be prevalently one of Scripture. Does the Bible really prohibit it? We assert that it does. And first, the Old Testament, which contained, in germ, all the principles of the New, allowed no regular church office to any woman. When a few of that sex were employed as mouth-pieces of God, it was in an office purely extraordinary, and in which they could adduce a supernatural attestation of their commission. No woman ever ministered at the altar, as either priest or Levite. No female elder was ever seen in a Hebrew congregation. No woman ever sat on the throne of the theocracy, except the pagan usurper and murderess, Athaliah. Now, Presbyterians at least believe that the church order of the Old Testament church was imported into the New, with less modification than any other part of the old religion. The ritual of types was greatly modified; new sacramental symbols replaced the old; the temple of sacrifice was superseded, leaving no sanctuary beneath the heavenly one, save the synagogue, the house of prayer. But the primeval presbyterial order continued unchanged. The Christianized synagogue became the Christian congregation, with its eldership, teachers, and deacons, and its women invariably keeping silence in the assembly. The probability thus raised is strong.

Secondly, If human language can make anything plain, it is that the New Testament institutions do not suffer the woman to rule or "to usurp authority over the man." (See 1 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Cor. xi. 3, 7-10; Eph. v. 22, 23; 1 Peter iii. 1, 5, 6.) In ecclesiastical affairs, at least, the woman's position in the church is subordinate to the man's. But, according to New Testament precedent and doctrine, the call to public teaching and ruling in the church must go together. Every elder is not a public teacher, but every regular public teacher must be a ruling elder. It is clearly implied in 1 Tim. v. 17 that there were ruling

elders who were not preachers, but never was the regular preacher heard of who was not *ex officio* a ruling elder. The scriptural qualifications for public teaching, the knowledge, piety, experience, authority, dignity, purity, moral weight, were *a fortiori* qualifications for ruling. "The greater includes the less." Hence it is simply inconceivable that the qualified person could experience a true call to public teaching and not also be called to spiritual rule. Hence, if it is right for the woman to preach, she must also be a ruling elder. But God has expressly prohibited the latter, and assigned to woman a domestic and social place, in which her ecclesiastical rule would be anarchy.

This argument may be put in a most practical and *ad hominem* (or *ad fœminam*) shape. Let it be granted, for argument's sake, that here is a woman whose gifts and graces, spiritual wisdom and experience, are so superior her friends feel with her that it is a blamable loss of power in the church to confine her to silence in the public assembly. She accordingly exercises her public gift rightfully and successfully. She becomes the spiritual parent of new-born souls. Is it not right that her spiritual progeny should look up to her for guidance? How can she, from her position, justify herself in refusing this second service? She felt herself properly impelled, by the deficiency in the quantity or quality of the male preaching at this place, to break over the restraints of sex and contribute her superior gifts to the winning of souls. Now, if it appear that a similar deficiency of male supervision, either in quantity or quality, exists at the same place, the same impulse must, by the stronger reason, prompt her to assume the less public and obtrusive work of supervision. There is no sense in her straining out the gnat after she has swallowed the camel; she ought to act the ruling elder, and thus conserve the fruits she has planted. She ought to admonish, command, censure, and excommunicate her male converts, including, possibly, the husband she is to obey at home, if the real welfare of the souls she has won requires.

The attempt may be made to escape this crushing demonstration by saying that these women consider themselves as preaching, not as presbyters, but as lay persons, that theirs is but a specimen of legitimate lay preaching. The answers are, that stated, public lay preaching is not legitimate, either for women or men, who remain without ordination (as was proved in this

Review, April, 1876); and that the terms of the inspired prohibition against the public preaching of women are such as to exclude this plea.

Let us now look at these laws themselves; we shall find them peculiarly, even surprisingly, explicit. First, we have 1 Cor. xi. 3-16, where the apostle discusses the relation and deportment of the sexes in the public Christian assemblages; and he assures the Corinthians, verses 2 and 16, that the rules he here announces were universally accepted by all the churches. The reader will not be wearied by details of exposition; a careful reading of the passage will give to him the best evidence for our interpretation, in its complete coherence and consistency. Two principles, then, are laid down: first, verse 4, that the man should preach (or pray) in public with head uncovered, because he then stands forth as God's herald and representative; and to assume at that time the emblem of subordination, a covered head, is a dishonor to the office and the God it represents; secondly, verses 5, 13, that, on the contrary, for a woman to appear or to perform any public religious function in the Christian assembly, unveiled, is a glaring impropriety, because it is contrary to the subordination of the position assigned her by her Maker, and to the modesty and reserve suitable to her sex; and even nature settles the point by giving her her long hair as her natural veil. Even as good taste and a natural sense of propriety would protest against a woman's going in public shorn of that beautiful badge and adornment of her sex, like a rough soldier or a laborer, even so clearly does nature herself sustain God's law in requiring the woman to appear always modestly covered in the sanctuary. The holy angels who are present as invisible spectators, hovering over the Christian assemblies, would be shocked by seeing women professing godliness publicly throw off this appropriate badge of their position (verse 10). The woman, then, has a right to the privileges of public worship and the sacraments; she may join audibly in the praises and prayers of the public assembly, where the usages of the body encourage responsive prayer; but she must always do this veiled or covered. The apostle does not in this chapter pause to draw the deduction, that if every public herald of God must be unveiled, and the woman must never be unveiled in public, then she can never be a public herald. But let us wait. He has not done with these

questions of order in public worship; he steadily continues the discussion of them through the fourteenth chapter, and he there at length reaches the conclusion he had been preparing, and in verses 34, 35, expressly prohibits women to preach publicly. "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted to them to speak" (in that public place), "but to be in subordination, as also the law saith. And if they wish to learn something"—about some doctrine which they there hear discussed but do not comprehend—"let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for women to speak in church." And in verse 37 he shuts up the whole discussion by declaring that if anybody pretends to have the Spirit, or the inspiration of prophecy, so as to be entitled to contest Paul's rules, *the rules are the commandments of the Lord* (Christ), not Paul's mere personal conclusions, so that to contest them on such pretensions of spiritual impulse is inevitably wrong and presumptuous. For the immutable Lord does not legislate in contradictory ways.

The next passage is 1 Tim. ii. 11-15. In the eighth verse the apostle, having taught what should be the tenor of the public prayers and why, says: "I ordain therefore that the males pray in every place" (in which the two sexes prayed publicly together). He then, according to the tenor of the passage in 1 Cor. xi., commands Christian women to frequent the Christian assemblies in raiment at once removed from untidiness and luxury, and so fashioned as to express the retiring modesty of their sex. He then adds: "Let the woman learn in quiet in all subordination. But I do not permit woman to teach" (in public) "nor to play the ruler over man, but to be in quietude. For Adam was first fashioned; then Eve. Again, Adam was not deceived" (by Satan), "but the woman, having been deceived, came to be in transgression" (first). "However, she shall be saved by the child-bearing, if they abide, with modest discretion, in faith and love and sanctity." In 1 Tim. v. 9-15, a sphere of church labor is evidently defined for *aged single women*, and for them only, who are widows or celibates without near kindred. So specific is the apostle that he categorically fixes the limit below which the church may not go in accepting even such laborers at sixty years. What was this sphere of labor? It was evidently some form of diaconal work, and not preaching, because the age, qualifications and connections all point to these private charitable

tasks, and the uninspired history confirms it. To all younger women the apostle then assigns their express sphere in these words (verse 14), "I ordain accordingly that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give no start to the adversary to revile" (Christians and Christianity). Here is at least strong negative evidence that Paul assigned no public preaching function to women. In Titus ii. 4, 5, women who have not reached old age are to be "affectionate to their husbands, fond of their children, prudent, pure, *keepers at home*, benevolent, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled." And the only teaching function hinted even for the aged women is, verse 4, that they should teach these private domestic virtues to their younger sisters. Does not the apostle here assign the *home* as the proper sphere of the Christian woman? That is her kingdom, and neither the secular nor the ecclesiastical commonwealth. Her duties in her home are to detain her away from the public functions. She is not to be a ruler of men, but a loving subject to her husband.

The grounds on which the apostle rests the divine legislation against the preaching of women make it clear that we have construed it aright. Collating 1 Cor. xi. with 1 Tim. ii., we find them to be the following: The male was the first creation of God, the female a subsequent one. Then, the female was made from the substance of the male, being taken from his side. The end of the woman's creation and existence is to be a helpmeet for man, in a sense in which the man was not originally designed as a helpmeet for the woman. Hence God, from the beginning of man's existence as a sinner, put the wife under the kindly authority of the husband, making him the head and her the subordinate in domestic society. The Lord said (Gen. iii. 16), "Thy desire shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Then last, the agency of the woman in yielding first to Satanic temptation and aiding to seduce her husband into sin was punished by this subjection, and the sentence on the first woman has been extended, by imputation, to all her daughters. These are the grounds on which the apostle says the Lord enacted that in the church assemblies the woman shall be pupil, and not public teacher, ruled, and not ruler. The reasons bear upon all women, of all ages and civilizations alike. Hence the honest expositor must conclude that the enactments are of uni-

versal force. Such reasons are, indeed, in strong opposition to the radical theories of individual human rights and equality now in vogue with many. Instead of allowing to all human beings a specific equality and an absolute natural independence, these Scripture doctrines assume that there are orders of human beings naturally unequal in their inherited rights, as in their bodily and mental qualities; that God has not ordained any human being to this proud independence, but placed all in subordination under authority, the child under its mother, the mother under her husband, the husband under the ecclesiastical and civil magistrates, and these under the law, whose guardian and avenger is God himself. And so far from flouting the doctrine of imputation as an antiquated barbarism, these Scriptures represent it as a living and just ruling principle, this very day determining, by the guilt of a woman who sinned six thousand years ago, when combining with the natural qualities of sex propagated in her race, a subordinate social state and a rigid disqualification for certain actions, for half the human race. Between the popular theories of individual human right and this sort of political philosophy there is indeed an irreconcilable opposition. But this is inspired. The only solution is that the other, despite all its confidence and arrogance, is false and hollow. "He that replieth against God, let him answer it."

The inspired legislation is explicit to every candid reader as human language can well make it. Yet modern ingenuity has essayed to explain it away. One is not surprised to find these expositions, even when advanced by those who profess to accept the Scriptures, tinctured with no small savor of infidelity. For a true and honest reverence for the inspiration of Scripture would scarcely try so hopeless a task as the sophisticating of so plain a law. Thus, sometimes we hear these remarks uttered almost as a sneer, "Oh, this is the opinion of Paul, a crusty old bachelor, an oriental, with his head stuffed with those ideas of woman which were current when society made her an ignoramus, a plaything, and a slave." Or, we are referred to the fable of the paintings of the man dominating the lion, in which the man was always the painter, and it is said, "Paul was a man; he is jealous for the usurped dominion of his sex. The law would be different if it were uttered through woman." What is all this except open unbelief and resistance, when the apostle says ex-

pressly that this legislation was the enactment of that Christ who condescended to be born of woman?

Again, one would have us read the prohibition of 1 Cor. xiv. 34. *ὃ γὰρ ἐπιτέτραπται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν*; "it is not permitted to females to babble." Some pretended usage is cited to show that the verb, *λαλεῖν* is here used in a bad sense only, and that the prohibition to a woman to talk nonsense in public address does not exclude, but rather implies, her right to preach, provided she preaches well and solidly. No expositor will need a reply to criticism so wretchedly absurd as this. But it may not be amiss to point out in refutation that the opposite of this *λαλεῖν* in Paul's own mind and statement is "to be silent." The implied distinction, then, is not here between solid speech and babbling, but between speaking publicly at all and keeping silence. Again, in the parallel declaration (1 Tim. ii. 12), the apostle says, *Γυναὶκὶ δὲ διδάσκειν οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω*, where he uses the word *διδάσκειν*: concerning whose regular meaning no such cavil can be invented. And the apostle's whole logic in the contexts is directed, not against silly teachings by women, but against women's teaching in public at all.

Another evasion is to say that the law is indeed explicit, but it was temporary. When woman was what paganism and the oriental harem had made her, she was indeed unfit for ruling and public teaching; she was but a grown-up child, ignorant, capricious and rash, like other children; and while she remained so the apostle's exclusion was wise and just. But the law was not meant to apply to the modern Christian woman, lifted by better institutions into an intellectual, moral and literary equality with the man. Doubtless were the apostle here, he would himself avow it.

This is at least more decent. But as an exegesis it is as unfair and untenable as the other. For, first, it is false that the conception of female character christianized, which was before the apostle's mind when enacting this exclusion from the pulpit, was the conception of an ignorant grown-up child from the harem. The harem was not a legitimate Hebrew institution. Polygamy was not the rule, but the exception, in reputable Hebrew families; nor were devout Jews, such as Paul had been, ignorant of the unlawfulness of such domestic abuses. Jewish manners and laws were not oriental, but a glorious exception

to orientalism, in the place they assigned woman; and God's word of the Old Testament had doubtless done among the Jews the same ennobling work for woman which we now claim Christianity does. To the competent archæologist it is known that it has ever been the trait of Judaism to assign an honorable place to woman; and the Jewish race has ever been as rare an exception as Tacitus says the German race was to the pagan depression of the sex common in ancient days. Accordingly, we never find the apostle drawing a depreciated picture of woman; every allusion of his to the believing woman is full of reverent respect and honor. Among the Christian women who come into Paul's history there is not one who is portrayed after this imagined pattern of childish ignorance and weakness. The Lydia, the Lois, the Eunice, the Phœbe, the Priscilla, the Damaris, the Roman Mary, the Junia, the Tryphena, the Tryphosa, the "beloved Persis" of the Pauline history, and the "elect lady" who was honored with the friendship of the aged John, all appear in the narrative as bright examples of Christian intelligence, activity, dignity, and nobleness. It was not left for the pretentious Christianity of the nineteenth century to begin the emancipation of woman. As soon as the primitive doctrine conquered a household, it did its blessed work in lifting up the feebler and oppressed sex; and it is evident that Paul's habitual conception of female Christian character in the churches in which he ministered *was at least as favorable* as his estimate of the male members. Thus the state of facts on which this gloss rests had no existence for Paul's mind; he did not consider himself as legislating temporarily in view of the inferiority of the female Christian character of his day, for he did not think it inferior. When this invasion is inspected it unmask itself simply into an instance of quiet egotism. Says the Christian "woman of the period" virtually, "I am so elevated and enlightened that I am above the law, which was well enough for those old fogies, Priscilla, Persis, Eunice, and the elect lady." Indeed! This is modesty with a vengeance! Was Paul only legislating temporarily when he termed modesty one of the brightest jewels in the Christian woman's crown?

A second answer is seen to this plea in the nature of the apostle's grounds for the law. Not one of them is personal, local, or temporary. Nor does he say that woman must not

preach in public because he regards her as less pious, less zealous, less eloquent, less learned, less brave, or less intellectual, than man. In the advocates of woman's right to this function there is a continual tendency to a confusion of thought, as though the apostle, when he says that woman must not do what man does, meant to disparage her sex. This is a sheer mistake. His reasoning will be searched in vain for any disparagement of the qualities and virtues of that sex; and we may at this place properly disclaim all such intention also. Woman is excluded from this masculine task of public preaching by Paul, not because she is inferior to man, but simply because her Maker has ordained for her another work which is incompatible with this. So he might have pronounced, as nature does, that she shall not sing bass, not because he thought the bass chords the more beautiful—perhaps he thought the pure *alto* of the feminine throat far the sweeter—but because her very constitution fits her for the latter part in the concert of human existence, and therefore unfits her for the other, the coarser and less melodious part.

But that the scriptural law was not meant to be temporary, and had no exclusive reference to the ignorant and childish woman of the Eastern harem, is plain from this, that every ground assigned for the exclusion is of universal and perpetual application. They apply to the modern, educated woman exactly as they applied to Phœbe, Priscilla, Damaris and Eunice. They lose not a grain of force by any change of social usages or feminine culture, being found in the facts of woman's origin and nature and the designed end of her existence. Thus this second evasion is totally closed. And the argument finds its final completion in such passages as 2 Tim. ii. 9 and v. 14. A few aged women of peculiar circumstances are admitted as assistants in the diaconal labors. The rest of the body of Christian women the apostle then assigns to the domestic sphere, intimating clearly that their attempts to go beyond it would minister to adversaries a pretext to revile. Here, then, we have the clearest proof, in a negative form, that he did not design women in future to break over; for it is *for woman as elevated and enlightened by the gospel he preached* that he laid down the limit.

Every true believer should regard the scriptural argument as first, as sufficient, and as conclusive by itself. But as the apos-

He said in one place, that his task was "to commend himself to every man's conscience in God's sight," so it is proper to gather the teachings of sound human prudence and experience which support God's wise law. The justification is not found in any disparagement of woman as man's natural inferior, but in the primeval fact: "Male and female made he them." In order to ground human society God saw it necessary to fashion for man's mate, not his exact image, but his counterpart. Identity would have utterly marred their companionship, and would have been an equal curse to both. But out of this unlikeness in resemblance it must obviously follow that each is fitted for works and duties unsuitable for the other. And it is no more a degradation to the woman that the man can best do some things which she cannot do so well, than to the man that woman has her natural superiority in other things. But it will be cried: "Your Bible doctrine makes man the ruler, woman the ruled." True. It was absolutely necessary, especially after sin had entered the race, that a foundation for social order should be laid in a family government. This government could not be made consistent, peaceful or orderly by being made double-headed, for human finitude, and especially sin, would ensure collision, at least at some times, between any two human wills. It was essential to the welfare of both husband and wife and of the offspring that there must be an ultimate human head somewhere. Now let reason decide, was it meet that the man be head over the woman, or the woman over the man? Was it right that he for whom woman was created should be subjected to her who was created for him; that he who was stronger physically should be subjected to the weaker; that the natural protector should be the servant of the *protégée*; that the divinely ordained bread-winner should be controlled by the bread-dispenser? Every candid woman admits that this would have been unnatural and unjust. Hence God, acting, so to speak, under an unavoidable moral necessity, assigned to the male the domestic government, regulated and tempered, indeed, by the strict laws of God, by self-interest and by the tenderest affection; and to the female the obedience of love. On this order all other social order depends. It was not the design of Christianity to subvert it, but only to perfect and refine it. Doubtless that spirit of wilfulness, which is a feature of our native carnality in both man and woman, tempts us to

feel that any subordination is a hardship, so that it is felt while God has been a Father to the man, he has been but a stepfather to the woman. Self-will resents this natural subordination as a natural injustice. But self-will forgets that "order is heaven's first law;" that subordination is the inexorable condition of peace and happiness, and this as much in heaven as on earth; that this subjection was not imposed on woman only as a penalty, but as for her and her offspring's good; and that to be governed under the wise conditions of nature is often a more privileged state than to govern. God has conformed his works of creation and providence to these principles. In creating man he has endowed him with the natural attributes which qualify him to labor abroad, to subdue dangers, to protect, to govern. He has given these qualities in less degree to woman, and in their place has adorned her with the less hardy, but equally admirable, attributes of body, mind and heart which qualify her to yield, to be protected, and to "guide the home." This order is founded, then, in the unchangeable laws of nature. Hence all attempts to reverse it must fail, and must result only in confusion.

Now, a wise God designs no clashing between his domestic and political and his ecclesiastical arrangements. He has ordained that the man shall be head in the family and the commonwealth; it would be a confusion full of mischief to make the woman head in the ecclesiastical sphere. But we have seen that the right of public teaching must involve the right of spiritual rule. The woman who has a right to preach, if there be any such, ought also claim to be a ruling elder. How would it work to have husband and wife, ruler and subject, change places as often as they passed from the dwelling or the court-room and senate chamber to the church? When we remember how universally the religious principles, which it is the prerogative of the presbyter to enforce, interpenetrate and regulate man's secular duties, we see that this amount of overturning would result in little short of absolute anarchy.

Again, the duties which natural affection, natural constitution, and imperious considerations of convenience distribute between the man and the woman make it practicable for him and impracticable for her to pursue, without their neglect, the additional tasks of the public preacher and evangelist. Let an instance be taken from the nurture of children. The bishop must be

“husband of one wife.” Both the parents owe duties to their children; but the appropriate duties of the mother, especially towards little children, are such that she could not leave them as the pastor must for his public tasks without criminal neglect and their probable ruin. It may be said that this argument has no application to unmarried women. The answers are, that God contemplates marriage as the proper condition of woman, while he does not make celibacy a crime, and that the sphere he assigns to the unmarried woman is also private and domestic.

Some minds doubtless imagine a degree of force in this statement, that God has bestowed on some women gifts and graces eminently qualifying them to edify his churches, and as he commits no waste he thereby shows that he designs such women at least to preach. Enough has been already said to show how utterly unsafe such pretended reasonings are. “God giveth no account of his matters to any man.” Does he not often give most splendid endowments for usefulness to young men whom he then removes by what we call a premature death from the threshold of the pastoral career? Yet “God commits no waste.” It is not for us to surmise how he will utilize those seemingly abortive endowments. He knows how and where to do it. We must bow to his dispensation, whether explicable or not. The case is the same in this respect with his ordinance restraining the most gifted woman from publicity. But there is a more obvious answer. God has assigned to her a private sphere sufficiently important and honorable to justify the whole expenditure of angelic endowments—the formation of the character of children. This is the noblest and most momentous work done on earth. Add to it the efforts of friendship, the duties of the daughter, sister, wife and charitable almoner, and the labors of authorship suitable for woman, and we see a field wide enough for the highest talents and the most sanctified ambition. Does self-will feel that somehow the sphere of the pulpit orator is more splendid still? Wherein? Only in that it has features which gratify carnal ambition and the lust for carnal applause of men. But let it be noted that *Christians are forbidden to have these desires!* Let, then, the Christian comply with God’s law requiring him to crucify ambition, and the only features which made any difference between the private and the public spheres of soul-culture are gone. The Christian who, in the performance of the

public work of rearing souls for heaven, fosters the ambitious motive, has deformed his worthiness in the task with a defilement which sinks it far below that of the humblest peasant mother who is training her child for God. Does the objector return to the charge with the cavil that, while the faithful mother rears six, or possibly twice six, children for God, the gifted evangelist may convert thousands? But that man would not have been the gifted evangelist had he not enjoyed the blessing of the modest Christian mother's training. Had he been reared in the disorderly home of the clerical Mrs. Jellyby, instead of being the spiritual father of thousands, he would have been an ignorant rowdy or a disgusting pharisee. So that the worthiness of his public success belongs fully as much to the modest mother as to himself. Again, the instrumentality of the mother's training in the salvation of her children is mighty and decisive; the influence of the minister over his hundreds is slight and non-essential. If he contributes a few grains, in numerous cases, to turn the scales for heaven, the mother contributes tons to the right scales in her few cases. The one works more widely on the surface, the other more deeply; so that the real amount of soil moved by the two workmen is not usually in favor of the preacher. The woman of sanctified ambition has nothing to regret as to the dignity of her sphere. She does the noblest work that is done on earth. Its *public* recognition is usually more through the children and beneficiaries she ennobles than through her own person. True; and that is precisely the feature of her work which makes it most Christ-like. It is precisely the feature at which a sinful and selfish ambition takes offence.

The movement towards the preaching of women does not necessarily spring from a secular "woman's rights" movement. The preaching of women marked the early Wesleyan movement to some extent, and the Quaker assemblies. But neither of these had political aspirations for their women. At the present time, however, the preaching of women and the demand of all masculine political rights are so synchronous, and are so often seen in the same persons, that their affinity cannot be disguised. They are two parts of one common impulse. If we understand the claim of rights made by these agitators, it includes in substance two things: that the legislation at least of society shall disregard all distinctions of sex and award all the same specific rights and

franchises to women and men in every respect; and that women, while in the married state, shall be released from every form of conjugal subordination and retain independent control of their property. These pretensions are indeed the proper logical consequences of that radical theory of human right which is now dominant in the country. According to that doctrine, every human being is naturally independent, owes no duties to civil or ecclesiastical society save those freely conceded in the "social contract"; is the natural equal of every other human except as he or she has forfeited liberty by crime. Legislation and taxation are unjust unless based on representation, which means the privilege of each man under government to vote for his governors. If these propositions were true, then, indeed, their application to women would be indisputable. And it would be hard for the radical politician to explain why it was right to apply them in favor of ignorant negroes and deny their application to intelligent ladies. We here see the great danger attending the present misguided woman's movement. Neither the politicians nor the American masses cherish the purpose of being logically consistent; and both are in the well-known habit of proclaiming doctrines for which they care nothing, and which they do not mean to hold honestly, as "stalking horses" for a temporary end. But their demagogism has given a currency and hold to these political heresies whose extent and tenacity make them perilous. God has made man a logical animal; the laws of his reason compel him to think connectedly to some degree. Hence false principles once firmly fixed are very apt to bring after them their appropriate corollaries in the course of time, however distasteful to the promulgators of the parent errors. To the radical mind, possessed with these false politics, the perpetual demand of these obvious corollaries by pertinacious women must apply a stress which is like the "continual dropping that weareth away a stone." They can quote the Declaration of Independence in the sense these radicals hold it: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are by nature equal and inalienably entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "All just government is founded in the consent of the governed," etc., etc. It is true that this document, rationally interpreted, teaches something wholly different from the absurd equality of the radical, which demands for every member

of society all the specific franchises which any member has. The wise men of 1776 knew that men are not naturally equal, in strength, talent, virtue, or ability; and that different orders of human beings naturally inherit very different sets of rights and franchises, according as they are qualified to enjoy and employ them for their own good and the good of the whole. But they meant to teach that in one very important respect all are naturally equal. This is the equality which Job recognized (ch. xxxi. 15) as existing between him and his slave; the equality of a common origin, a common humanity and immortality. It is the equality of the golden rule. By this right, that human being whom the laws endow with the smallest franchises in society has the same kind of moral right to have that small franchise respected by his fellows, as the man who justly possesses the largest franchise. It is the equality embodied in the great maxim of the British Constitution, "that before the law all are equal." This is true, although Britain is an aristocratic monarchy, and rights are distributed to the different orders very differently. Earl Derby has sundry franchises which the British peasant can no more possess than he can grasp the moon. Yet in the constitutional sense, the peasant and the earl are "equal before the law." If indicted for crime, each has the inalienable right to be tried by his peers. The same law which shields the earl's entailed estates, equally protects the peasant's cottage. As the men of 1776 were struggling to retain for America the rights of British freemen, which the king was unconstitutionally invading, their declaration must be construed as teaching this equality of the free British Constitution. So when they said that "taxation without representation" was intrinsically unjust, they never dreamed of teaching this maxim as to individual tax-payers. The free British Constitution, for which they were contending, had never done so. They asserted the maxim of the commonwealth. Some representation of the commonwealth taxed, through such order of the citizens as properly constitute the representative *populus*, is necessary to prevent taxation from becoming unjust.

But this, the true, historical and rational meaning of these maxims, is now unpopular with radicalism; it cannot away with the true doctrine. And for this reason it has no sufficient answer for the plea of "women's rights." The true answer is

found in the correct statement of human right we have given. The woman is not designed by God, nor entitled to all the franchises in society to which the male is entitled. God has disqualified her for any such exercise of them as would benefit herself or society, by the endowments of body, mind, and heart he has given her, and the share he has assigned her in the tasks of social existence. And as she has no right to assume the masculine franchises, so she will find in the attempt to do so only ruin to her own character and to society. For instance, the very traits of emotion and character which make woman man's cherished and invaluable "helpmeet," the traits which she must have in order to fulfil the purpose of her being would ensure her unfitness to meet the peculiar temptations of publicity and power. The attempt would debauch all these lovelier traits, while it would leave her still, as the rival of man, "the weaker vessel." She would lose all and gain nothing.

One consequence of this revolution would be so certain and so terrible, that it cannot be passed over. It must result in the abolition of all permanent marriage ties. Indeed, the bolder advocates do not scruple to avow it. The destruction of marriage would follow by this cause, if no other, that the unsexed politicating woman, the importunate manikin-rival, would never inspire in men that true affection on which marriage should be founded. The mutual attraction of the two complementary halves would be forever gone. The abolition of marriage would follow again by another cause. The rival interests and desires of two equal wills are inconsistent with domestic union, government, or peace. Shall the children of this unnatural connection be held responsible to both of two sinful but coördinate and equally supreme wills? Heaven pity the children. Again, who ever heard of a perpetual copartnership in which the parties had no power to enforce the performance of the mutual duties nor to dissolve the tie made intolerable by violation? It would be as iniquitous as impossible. Such a copartnership of equals, with coördinate wills and independent interests, must be separable at will, as all other such copartnerships are.

This common movement for "women's rights," and women's preaching, must be regarded, then, as simply infidel. It cannot be candidly upheld without attacking the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. We are convinced that there is only

one safe attitude for Christians, presbyters, and church courts to assume towards it. This is utterly to discountenance it, as they do any other assault of infidelity on God's truth and kingdom. The church officer who becomes an accomplice of this intrusion certainly renders himself obnoxious to discipline, just as he would by assisting to celebrate an idolatrous mass.

We close with one suggestion to such women as may be inclined to this new claim. If they read history, they find that the condition of woman in Christendom, and especially in America, is most enviable as compared with her state in all other ages and nations. Let them ponder candidly how much they possess here, which their sisters have enjoyed in no other age. What bestowed those peculiar privileges on the Christian women of America? The Bible. Let them beware, then, how they do anything to undermine the reverence of mankind for the authority of the Bible. It is undermining their own bulwark. If they understand how universally in all but Bible lands the "weaker vessel" has been made the slave of man's strength and selfishness, they will gladly "let well enough alone," lest in grasping at some impossible prize beyond, they lose the privileges they now have, and fall back to the gulf of oppression from which these doctrines of Christ and Paul have lifted them.

THEORIES OF THE ELDERSHIP.¹

IT strikes many Presbyterians with surprise, that the General Assembly and our leading periodicals in this year 1860, one hundred and fifty years after the beginning of our church in America, should be largely occupied in discussing the question, "What is Presbyterianism?" They ask with displeasure, "Are fundamentals never to be settled among us? Is the church never to be relieved of these debates, which thus agitate the settled foundations of our theory?" We may answer to these indignant questions with an emphatic *No*. The good brethren who thus deplore these renewed discussions of first principles misconceive the nature of the human mind and of free institutions. While man remains the creature he is, such discussions are to be expected and desired. Each generation must do its own thinking, and learn for itself its own lessons in first truths and general principles. If we insist that this generation of Presbyterians shall hold our fathers' principles on trust, and by mere prescription, the result will be that they will not hold them sincerely at all. For, by the very reason that general principles do not lie on the surface, but are to be detected by analysis and induction, they are always, in every science, other than first appearances and first impressions would lead men to suppose. Hence, in every science, the true general principles are unpopular and paradoxical, in the first, unthinking view. Prior to this active investigation, it is, in astronomy for instance, the earth which seems to stand still and the heavenly bodies to move; in hydrostatics, it is the empty tube which seems to suck up the water; in theology, it is the Pelagian view which commends itself to the natural mind, instead of the Calvinistic. So in church government, the actual first truths of the New Testament are not those which our unreflecting impressions would lead us to suppose. Hence each generation must correct those first im-

¹ This article appeared in the *North Carolina Presbyterian*, September, 1860.

pressions for itself, and be led down to the true principles by the laborious collision of debate and investigation.

Besides this, the human mind loves the concrete; and the labor of abstraction and correct generalization is most irksome to it. Yet it is certain that all general truths, that are properly such, are abstractions. Hence, most minds never trouble themselves to attain independently to an intelligent view of such truths, but adopt the practical results of them with a sort of imperfect comprehension and conviction; and of many who make such first truths the regulative sources of their practical opinions, the general views are more or less vague, and their agreement with each other in them is only approximative. Now we cheerfully grant that both these classes may be practically very good and honest Presbyterians, and that their detailed opinions and conduct may be much better than the general principles of their theory. But it is none the less true that the general principles sooner or later work out their logical details in the public mind; and that it is the men who hold these abstractions—a Plato, an Augustine, a Calvin, a Des Cartes, a Jefferson, a Calhoun—correctly or incorrectly, who in the issue determine the practical opinions of their fellow-men for good or for evil. The practical opinions can only be kept correct by a perpetual recurrence to first truths. Hence we must expect the perpetual agitation of those first truths. It indicates, not, indeed, the perfect health of the body ecclesiastical, a condition not to be expected while Christians are imperfect, but its sanative tendencies.

As in the General Assembly, the question of Boards was found to be indirectly connected with the question how far the *form* of the church's government is limited and fixed by a *divine warrant*, so the nature of the *ruling eldership* will be found to depend in part on the same question. This fact is clearly indicated by the course which the pending discussion of the eldership has followed in our periodicals, and will appear further in the sequel of our discussion. Enough now to say, that just so far as we conceive the form of the church to be fixed by a divine warrant, so far will we feel ourselves limited and bound by what the New Testament teaches of the elder's office. Hence, something must be premised as to the question of *jus divinum*. It may be assumed that all parties among us, those represented by the *Re-*

pertory, and those represented by the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, concur in these two truths on this subject:

First, That Jesus Christ, as King in his visible kingdom, the church, has positively fixed, by his divine authority, some general principles of church government, so that, with regard to those principles, no body of Christians under heaven ought to claim any discretion of their own, on any pretext of policy, to depart from Christ's legislation; and those bodies which thus depart from him do therein commit disobedience and sin, and make themselves, so far, less scriptural and perfect churches of Christ.

Second, But yet, the general features of church order are not so established *jure divino* that the mere lack of any one positively unchurches a body of Christian believers. A church may to some extent commit sin and disobedience, and still be a true, though imperfect, church. On any other supposition, where should we sinners, the Presbyterian Church, stand? All parties among us embrace, as true parts of the church catholic, all bodies which hold Christ the Head, and maintain his word, ministry and sacraments among them, however they may vary in form of government.

But, then, we will agree that we should strive to be not only imperfectly, but perfectly conformed to Christ's will in our government. How much discretion, then, has Christ left us as to forms of government; or, to vary the question, how far does his divine legislation extend in fixing those forms? It is here that the divergence among us begins. Some, with the *Repertory*, say that Christ's legislation only fixes the general outlines, and leaves all the rest to be determined, or from time to time changed, by the church herself, in a prudent regard to policy and convenience. These persons charge upon the class represented by the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, that they, on the contrary, hold that Christ has fixed *jure divino* the whole form of the church in all its details, so that nothing can be instituted in the church unless a New Testament warrant can be found explicitly for it. To a dispassionate mind this charge is obviously overstrained, and is only prompted by forensic excitement. The latter party never intended to be understood thus in the absurd sense imputed to them.

But our purpose is not to undertake to interpret the opinions of others, but to state our own. We would say, then, that the

statement of the *jus divinum* given by the *Repertory* is inaccurate and ambiguous. For all might grant it, and still raise the question, "What are those general outlines which Christ has authoritatively given? How general shall we make them?" The latitudinarian party would make them so general that they would fix nothing but that the church shall have a *ministry*, of any sort whatever, the word, and some sort of ordinances. All else they would claim as proper to be determined or changed by human discretion. Dr. Hodge would define those general outlines to be the ultimate authority of the people, to be exercised representatively; the parity of the clergy; and the unity of the church, as opposed to a congregational independence. The prelatist would say that the general outline was to be found in the essentials of diocesan episcopacy.

We would prefer, then, to state the doctrine of the *jus divinum* differently. On the one hand, Christ has not fixed by a divine warrant every detail of the agencies through which the church is to act in all her varying circumstances, for then "I suppose the world itself would not contain the books which should be written." On the other hand, he has given to his kingdom a *definite*—not merely a general—*outline*, one which makes it a definite and characteristic thing in government as truly as in theology, and therefore the outgrowth of the details demanded by varying circumstances is to take place in strict conformity with those definite outlines, and only in the direction which they indicate. Is the question asked, "What are those definite outlines?" We answer they are to be found precisely in the apostolic precedents and directions as to government found by an honest exposition in the Gospels, Acts and Epistles. If asked more particularly for a detailed answer, we should be willing to reply in the tenor of Dr. Hodge's *Essay on Presbyterianism*, with some modifications: where the indwelling of the Holy Ghost is, there, under Christ, is the church power; and hence, that power, so far as it has a human seat, resides ultimately in the whole brotherhood. This church power is to be exercised representatively, and not popularly, by the hands of equal and co-ordinate presbyters, acting in all customary cases, not singly, but in presbyterial courts of wider or narrower jurisdiction. All these officers are presbyterially equal, and all ministers enjoy a ministerial parity. Precisely three classes of official functions are assigned

for reaching the great end of the church, viz., preaching, inspection and deaconship, of which the two first may be in the same hands, so that there are three names of office, and no more, viz., the preaching-elder, the ruling elder, and the deacon. The church is one in such sense that a smaller part is subject to a larger in the Lord, and a larger to the whole. And last, the Bible alone is the authoritative statute-book of this government. Such is a substantially correct, not perhaps a perfect, statement of the divine plan of church government, and it evidently composes a distinctive and consistent whole, *which is Presbyterianism*. Now, we do not pretend to find an explicit divine warrant for many details under this plan, such, for instance, as these: that preachers, and not elders, shall usually moderate all presbyterial courts; that the number of courts shall be four, the parochial, district, provincial and national presbyteries, instead of three or five; that some of them shall meet semi-annually and some annually; that some things they shall do in open court and some other things by committee, etc., etc. But we contend that all these details, undetermined by express divine warrant, ought to be determined by the church in strict accordance with the definite character of the divine outline. We do assert that Christ's simple plan being the device of infinite wisdom, and being expressly assigned by Christ to his church for accomplishing all the parts of that sole function which he permits her to undertake in the world's conversion and sanctification, is adequate to that work in all ages and circumstances. So that the church is never entitled, on the plea of convenience, to make a fundamental addition or change with regard to this plan. Nor ought she to add anything more in the way of details than is really necessary for the attainment of her great end. In a word, Christ's church government is one of limited power and strict construction.

Before offering the evidence for this statement, we will advert, for the purpose of illustration, to the manner in which it applies to the Board question, recently so much agitated in our church. The proper application of it seems to have been either indistinctly stated by the opponents of our present boards or incorrectly apprehended by their defenders. Those defenders continually retort upon their adversaries, as though they held the *jus divinum* theory so strictly as to details that no scrip-

tural presbyterial court could lawfully depute any of its functions at all; so that it was inconsistent in them to hold that a Synod could raise a committee under the title of a Board of Directors to superintend in its name the business of theological education within its jurisdiction, or a Committee of Missions, or any such thing. Now all this is aside from the true application of the theory of *jus divinum*. A scriptural, presbyterial court may properly depute some of its functions; it may avail itself of the maxim, *Quod facit per alium facit per se*. But after granting all this, two questions concerning boards remain. Are their present powers mere cases of deputized power? Are they properly committees, or even properly commissions, of scriptural courts of presbyters? Or is a board an unscriptural *tertium quid*, neither a proper committee nor itself a proper representative court of presbyters of the church? And second, if this objection is surmounted, are not these boards more complex and cumbersome, are they not a wider departure from the simple, scriptural line of presbyterial action, than is really demanded for the efficient performance of the church's evangelistic work? If they are, even though they were granted to be nothing more than committees, their employment is in derogation of Christ's divine plan for the church's action. In using them the church is assuming more ungranted power than is properly necessary to carry out the granted powers. She is departing from the spirit of Christ's plan, in that she betrays a lack of faith in the universal adaptation of that simple, yet infinitely wise, organism which Christ has given his church. Now, the two above questions are questions of fact, of experience, about which honest Presbyterians may differ.

But to return. It was properly stated in the General Assembly, that if the boards are not scriptural courts of presbyters, nor properly the creatures or committees of such courts, they should have no place in our system, because the *jus divinum* form Christ has given forbids the church to invent any distinct, substantive addition thereto. She may only carry out the details of Christ's invention according to circumstances. So that the absence of Scripture warrant for such additions is equivalent to a prohibition. Upon this the question was asked (which would be ground of amusement were it not a ground for sorrow), "where is the proof text to establish that doctrine?" That a

Presbyterian officer should ask such a question is proof of a lamentable defect in the comprehension of our true system. The answer is: We find the proof texts in Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, where Christ declares his autocratic headship over the church, his kingdom, and gives it its great commission, appointing as its one grand function, the world's redemption from sin. We find them in 1 Cor. xii. 28, and Ephes. iv. 11, where we are told that Christ *gave his church* just so many (and no more) names of office for the edifying of the body of Christ. We find them in the promises, such as, John xvi. 13, where Christ pledges to his apostles his infallible guidance in organizing the church and administering it, and in the claims, such as Acts xv. 28, 2 Cor. xiii. 10, which the inspired apostles make of such power. Now in every government of laws, human or divine, which derives its authority from either constitutional precedents or documents, the powers proper to the government must be learned on this simple, common-sense rule, that the government is to contain *only what is granted*. Otherwise, it is as plain as the sun, that its constitution is no constitution. The demand of a Scripture proof text to establish the doctrine, that the church may not invent a new organism simply because Christ has withheld positive authority for it, is just as unreasonable as the demand that we should prove by express quotation from the text of the Constitution of the United States, that Congress may not constitutionally have a third house of ecclesiastical dignitaries. The proof is simply in the fact that the Constitution says, "Congress shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives." The fact that a third house is not ordained prohibits it. On any other theory a constitution is worthless.

We shall give a summary of the matter, which is but the substance of the scriptural facts we have cited. Christ is sovereign, and the visible church is his kingdom. He gave to his church a set of institutions by Moses. At the new dispensation he abrogated a large part of these by himself and his apostles. What he did not abrogate is still of force. Just before his ascension he pointed out to the church its one grand function, the world's redemption. He gave to his church, by himself and by apostles to whom he gave inspired and providential guidance for that purpose, a set of officers and an organism adapted by infinite wisdom to the church's work under the new dispensation. He

caused that organization to be left on record in the New Testament, partly in the shape of precepts and partly of precedents for all ages to imitate. It is true that this organization was partly developed under the apostles' hands, feature after feature, as the exigencies of the new dispensation called for it, first, speaking only of the parts intended to be permanent, the eldership, then the deaconship, then the presbyterial council of review. The organism was not made like a wagon ; it grew like a tree. But this is the very reason why it possesses a divine simplicity, wisdom and capability which render it adequate, when legitimately worked, to attain all the church's proper ends in all generations. But the fact that Christ formed it by a gradual development by no means justifies *us* in undertaking to make any substantive addition in the way of farther development, except as that increase is the fair outgrowth of the tree Christ made. And the reason is, that *the church no longer has inspired men* to guide the process of change. Our part is to take the form of government Christ has given us in its divine simplicity, and apply and extend it, until the world is subdued to him, in the spirit of humble faith.

We have given these explanations with a view especially to their application to the theories of the ruling eldership. This subject has received peculiar importance at this time through three articles in the April and July numbers of the *Repertory*. The view of the ruling elder's office, which, we were happy to believe, was becoming prevalent in our denomination, is substantially the one advocated by the venerable Dr. Samuel Miller, a man whose justness of thought and soundness in deduction the church will yet learn to value more highly than it has been the fashion to do. This theory teaches that the office of ruling elder is emphatically of divine institution in the church. It is the same, so far as the powers of inspection and government go, with that of the preacher. Wherein the preacher is *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπίσκοπος* he holds the same office in substance as the ruling elder. The difference is that he has the additional function of acting as God's public ambassador in the word and sacraments. Ruling as well as preaching elders are intended in the New Testament, where they are called *πρεσβύτεροι* and *ἐπίσκοποι*. They are properly to be ordained presbyterially, by the parochial presbytery, indeed, and by imposition of the hands of the whole session.

They, as well as the deacons, are in as proper a sense clergy as preachers are. And all the *ruling functions* of the church belong jointly and equally to these two kinds of elders, and are to be exercised by them in presbyterial courts, local, district, provincial or general, except in those cases where, under peculiar circumstances, these courts depute the temporary exercise of ruling powers to an evangelist or similar person.

The theory advocated in the *Repertory* is far different. It asserts, indeed, that the ruling elder is a scriptural officer (inconsistently, as we shall see), but denies that he is ever called officially $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ or $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\varsigma$ in the New Testament, and that he is in any sense of the same order or office with the preacher. Whenever the New Testament speaks of $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\varsigma$ in the church, it means exclusively preachers, so that ruling elders are not presbyters officially. The order of presbyter-preachers is the essential and characteristic one in the church, so that if this order is present, a full-fledged church court is present, and all church powers may be legitimately exercised without ruling elders. Yet the church *may* if she pleases—and it is politic to do so—scripturally admit ruling elders to all church courts as representatives of the people's rights and aids in government. But these ruling elders are still nothing but *laymen*, have no claim to the clerical rank; and although they may with propriety receive a formal *appointment* to office with some religious solemnity, have no right to be *ordained* by imposition of hands; nor is that appointment a presbyterial act, *i. e.*, sessional, but the personal and ministerial act of the preacher who appoints him.

Such are the astounding assertions by which the church has been startled at this late day, after having been brought, by the irrefragable facts and arguments of Dr. Miller and others following him, to a general acquiescence in the scriptural view for a whole generation. These essays receive a factitious importance far above their ability, from their appearance in the *Princeton Review*, because it is generally understood that this quarterly admits nothing which does not represent with general correctness the views of its conductors. And this is confirmed by the fact that the July number contains also an article entitled, "What is Presbyterianism," which almost avows its own authorship, or at least is universally understood to be the work of the

editor of the *Review*. This essay refers to the two on the eldership with general approbation, and avows substantially the same views of the office. Now, if so influential a periodical as the *Repertory* advocates them, it is right that Presbyterians should look to their accuracy. We propose, therefore, to continue the examination of the two theories, which we shall attempt to do candidly and yet courteously.

The reader will bear in mind that the point of discussion is not whether God has instituted ruling elders in the church, for this the other party professes to admit; but the question is, whether ruling elders were among those scriptural $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$, called also $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$, of whom we read in the Acts and Epistles, as set over the churches by the imposition of hands, and whose qualifications and functions are described in Acts xx., 1 Tim. iii., and Titus i.; or whether they are to be regarded as a totally different and inferior order. It is on this question that the whole difference of the two theories turns. Now we assert with Dr. Miller that ruling elders, as well as preachers, are proper official $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ and $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$ in the Scripture sense:

1. Because the whole institution was borrowed from the government of the Hebrew Church. From time immemorial the whole local government of the Hebrews had been presbyterial. But especially the synagogues, which may be considered the parish churches of the Hebrews, were governed by a bench of elders, never less than three, called in Hebrew, $\זְבָנִים$ and in Greek, $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$, or among the Jews of the dispersion, $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$. To this *all* respectable antiquaries agree. Of this, what is said in the New Testament itself of rulers of synagogues is sufficient evidence. No matter how small the synagogue, these elders were always a plurality. There was also a deacon or deacons, whose duty was to keep the house and sacred books, called in Luke ix. 20 the minister. Now it matters not whether we believe with Vitringa that any or all of these elders acted in turn as spokesmen or preachers of the synagogue; or with Maimonides, Lightfoot, Prideaux, and many others, that one of these elders was selected as a permanent president and director of public worship, under the name of "Angel of the Congregation," all agree that the whole bench were official elders, and were all ordained to the charge by imposition of hands. If Vitringa's

opinion is the true one, all were preaching elders. If the opinion of all the other antiquaries is correct, all were truly *πρεσβύτεροι* and *ἐπίσκοποι*, and one among them had the additional function of being not only a *πρεσβύτερος*, but the public spokesman of the assemblage. The writer in the *Repertory*, in his eagerness to find some sort of elder in the synagogue lower than the proper *πρεσβύτερος*, confounds the *Parnasim*, the deacons or waiting-men, with the elders; a strange blunder.

Now all Presbyterians, and many Episcopalians even, as Bishops Burnet and Whately, teach that the synagogue was the model followed by Christ and his apostles in forming the Christian congregation. And here is one powerful argument in favor of Presbyterianism. Is the *Repertory* willing to surrender the cause of Presbyterianism in this respect to the prelatists? If not, if the argument from the synagogue to the Christian church is sound, then our conclusion is unavoidable. There was no sort of ruling elders in the synagogue, except the *זבנן* who were ordained by imposition of hands, and were called officially *πρεσβύτεροι*, and *ἐπίσκοποι*. Then the ruling elders in the Christian church are of the same sort. In the pattern copied, there is no precedent for any other sort. But that the church was modeled on the synagogue appears plainly from the facts that the worship of the synagogue was moral and perpetual, while that of the temple was ritual, typical and temporary; that Christ and his apostles were Hebrews, accustomed to worship in the synagogues from childhood; that many primitive churches were but synagogues or parts of synagogues christianized; and above all, that all the three officers, and the very names of office, in the synagogue were borrowed by the new dispensation, "angel," "presbyter," "deacon" (or waiting-man). In a word, this presbyterial organization was God's own ordinance for the Old Testament church, in all that part of the worship and discipline not typical. When the typical was abrogated by the new dispensation, this presbyterial form was left unchanged; and, like the church-membership of believers' children, it stands, therefore, still sustained by the same divine authority which upheld it all through the ages of Moses, David and Ezra.

This view receives powerful confirmation from the striking fact that while the institution of the apostleship and deaconship is expressly described, no account whatever is given of the first

institution of the Christian eldership. This office is first mentioned as though it needed no explanation and existed as a matter of course, at the end of the eleventh chapter of Acts. Often afterwards elders are mentioned, but nowhere is any account of their introduction given. How can this be explained so naturally as by this statement, that every Hebrew mind was so familiar with presbyterial government, in both church and state, that the church at once adopted it as a thing admitting no hesitation and needing no explanation? But we repeat, if the Christian ruling elder is the Hebrew presbyter, then he is full-fledged $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\varsigma$, in the official sense of the New Testament.

2. The meaning and usage of the two words show that they must apply to the ruling elder at least as strictly as they do to the preacher. We are told much of a popular and general use of the word $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$, as meaning, primarily, an old man, and then one of eminence, weight or wisdom; so be it. But we opine that when the judges of thousands, hundreds and tens in Israel are called *presbyters* or *elders*, when the seventy members of the Sanhedrin are called *presbyters*, the name is technical and official. And its official use, as well in secular as in sacred institutions, always suggested to the Jew the ideas of ruling, overseeing and judicial functions, rather than teaching functions. The preachers of the nation were the prophets, and next to them were the priests, Levites and doctors. The parochial schoolmasters of the nation were the Levites. But the elders were chosen from all the tribes. A Levite was not an elder by descent from the priestly tribe; he might happen to become an elder of the village or synagogue where he resided by election, and then there was an instance of a preaching elder. But the distinctive function of the eldership of the Jews was not preaching, but ruling. So the word $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\varsigma$ currently given to these synagogue-elders by Greek-speaking Jews, means exactly *inspector*—not a teaching, but a ruling function. Now, shall we be told that the Jewish Christians who wrote the New Testament, knowing their own language and usages, applied the words $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\varsigma$ exclusively to an officer whose prominent and characteristic function was, as the *Repertory* asserts, *preaching*, and that they always excluded their application to the ruling officers, when the words both meant ruling rather

than preaching by etymology and universal usage? It is incredible. On the contrary, the preacher of the Christian church only becomes *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπίσκοπος* by becoming a ruling elder. He is a presbyter not only because he preaches, but because he also rules. And we repeat, this is not a mere etymological argument; not only the etymology, but the absolutely uniform usage, in things civil and ecclesiastical, up to the time when the sacred writers began to apply the two terms *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* to officers of the Christian church, gives *ruling*, and not *teaching in public*, as their distinctive meaning. It is simply preposterous to hold that the New Testament authors adopted those very terms to express a function different from the one they had always before indicated, and absolutely withheld it from the men possessing the very function it was always used to describe.

Hence, in part, arises the high probability of the correctness of that explanation which the writer in the *Repertory* attributes, without warrant, to Neander as its inventor. This explanation supposes that the first elders (*πρεσβύτεροι, ἐπίσκοποι*) of Christian congregations after Pentecost were ruling elders rather than preaching elders; that the function for which alone they were first needed and first appointed was that of inspection. The public teaching was sufficiently provided for at first by the perpetual labors of the apostles, and by the numbers of persons who were endued with charisms, or *inspired gifts* of prophecy and exhortation. For we know that the apostles were exceedingly active, and that the abundant bestowal of these charisms, or extraordinary and inspired endowments, was one of the blessings of the day, regularly bestowed on every newly planted church which the apostles visited. Let the reader consult Acts ii. 38; vi. 3; viii. 15, 16; xix. 1-6; 1 Cor. xii. 4-11. But the apostleship and these charisms were both intended to be temporary. Hence God, while he caused the introduction *first of the ruling elder*, who alone was at first needed, continuing his own time-honored presbyterial mode of government, also caused his apostles, as soon as a more permanent provision for public instruction was needed in the church, to introduce a permanent preaching officer, the "pastor-teacher" of Eph. iv. 11. But as nothing was more natural than that this officer should be sought among those members of the ruling eldership who had, in addition to the presbyterial virtues, the gift of public speaking, the

combination of functions presented by the preaching presbyter, "the angel of church," was ultimately found in each church. And when one not hitherto a presbyter was chosen as a suitable preacher, he was naturally introduced into the church session.

The *Repertory* asserts that Dr. Miller, who presents this explanation, borrowed it from the fanciful brain of Dr. Neander. This is sufficiently refuted by saying that Dr. Miller, in his treatise published in 1831, expressly says that he had held and published substantially the same views of the eldership twenty years before. This was long before Neander published the first crude essay of his *History of the Church* in the German language. But what difference does the paternity of the explanation make if it is every way probable and reasonable? And that it is so, appears thus: that it contradicts no New Testament fact, that it happily harmonizes and satisfies all the facts of the history, and that it accords with contemporary Hebrew usages and modes of thought.

But the author in the *Repertory* objects that preaching the gospel is the grand, prominent characteristic function of the church, and hence it is unreasonable to suppose that the essential order of church officers should be named and formally characterized by a function, that of ruling and inspection, which is so subordinate in importance. He urges that surely the official class in the church, its organic hand, will be characterized by that which is the church's great official function.

We reply, first: grant the assumption, and with this writer thrust aside the ruling eldership as a mere incidental of the church's order. The difficulty remains just the same, for we still have the essential order in whom the organic functions of the church are all expressed, the order of preachers, named ἐπίσκοποι and πρεσβύτεροι, instead of ζητοῦντες. They receive their name from that which is their non-essential function! If the objection knocks down anything, it is the objector himself. But second, the objection is of no force, for it does not follow that if *preaching* rather than *ruling* were the church's most important and distinctive function, it would therefore be unnatural and unreasonable to denominate the official class generally by the ruling function. It is perfectly natural to denominate all subdivisions of the class by that general function which is common to them all, though that function be not the highest. Thus we

call a general officer a *soldier*, as well as his subalterns and privates. The distinctive idea of a soldier is one who fights. But the general, personally, never fights. And yet his function of giving general orders is more elevated and important than that of any one fighting man. But third, the statement needs correction, that *preaching* is the distinctive and most important function in the church. The church is the "pillar and ground of the truth," and its great commission is to "disciple all nations;" but this only proves that its grand function is *teaching*, not preaching. By preaching, by sacraments, by discipline, by domestic instruction, by teaching from house to house, the church in all its orders is to hold forth the word of life. We are far from being willing to admit that preaching is more important than all other means of inculcation besides.

The writer in the *Repertory* objects to Dr. Thornwell's statement of "one *order* of presbyters embracing two *classes*, the preaching elder and the ruling elder;" that the term class is more general than order, and therefore the latter cannot be inclusive of the latter. Well, then, let us state it thus: "There is one *class* of presbyters embracing two *orders*, the preaching elder and the ruling elder." Where, now, is the objection? This supposition shows that, even if it had any correctness, it would be merely a verbal quibble.

A sort of *reductio ad absurdum* is attempted in another place thus: the two statements are made: first, that ruling is the essence of the presbyterate in all cases, and second, that the preaching elder must be held, in accordance with 1 Tim. v. 17, as a more dignified and honorable office. But these two statements are asserted to be mutually destructive of each other. We answer, this is but a reassertion, in another phase, of an objection already set aside. It is enough to answer, that fighting is the essence of the idea of the soldier, and the soldier who commands as well as fights, is more honorable than he is who only fights; yet we call them both soldiers. The truth is, that the necessary opposition and inconsistency does not exist in the case, unless we hold that every officer must in every case receive his official denomination from the most important of his functions, for this is the *major* of the syllogism. But is this true? Every one sees that it is notoriously incorrect in a hundred cases, and especially where one combines in his person two functions,

those of a preacher and a presbyter, it is every way natural that when we are speaking of his ruling functions, we should denominate him therefrom, presbyter, although these be not his most important functions.

A kindred objection to this is made by the assertion that it is an unheard-of absurdity to denominate by one term two classes of functions permanently distinct and untransferable. Let us see. Are not certain judicial officers called "judges," some of whom have federal jurisdiction under the United States, some appellate jurisdiction under State laws, some a chancery jurisdiction, and some a common law jurisdiction? Yet all are distinct. Has the writer in the *Repertory* ever heard of a class called "justices of the peace," who are taught by the law always to subscribe themselves by that name, and who yet exercise at different times the functions of judges of law, of peace and police officers, of assessors of taxes for their county, of commissioners of county buildings and bridges, and of notaries public to authenticate conveyances? Or, to select a more scriptural illustration, did he ever read Acts xiv. 15, of "*the apostles Barnabas and Paul?*" According to this argument, he is bound to concede to the prelatist, that there is here only one order of apostleship, and one class under it. (We beg his pardon; one *class*, and one *order* under it.) That is, he must concede that Barnabas was an apostle in every sense and in every function in which Paul was. And where, then, is our defence against the prelatist claim, that the apostleship was transmissible? The truth is, this, like the preceding objections, is but a verbal one. They do not rise to the dignity of arguments.

We will resume our discussion by reminding the reader of the true point in debate. This is not whether there should be ruling elders, for all parties profess to concede so much: but the question is, what is the nature of the ruling elder's office, ordination and powers? One party, finding expression in the Princeton *Repertory*, holds that wherever the Scriptures speak of official $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\upsilon\omicron\iota$ they mean preachers alone; that they alone are the essential bond of the church's government; that ruling elders are in no proper, official sense $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ or $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\upsilon\omicron\iota$ and in no part of their office coördinate with preachers; that they are not entitled to any ordination by laying on of hands; that they are simply laymen admitted into presbyterial

courts as representatives of the people, yet in no sense essential constituent parts of those courts, which may in every case legitimately subsist without them, so far as Scripture warrants are concerned. Our view, on the other hand, is that of Dr. Samuel Miller, that ruling elders are scriptural $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\theta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$; that they should have a presbyterial ordination by laying on of hands—in the parochial presbytery, the church session—and that in all powers of inspection and rule they are co-ordinate with preaching elders, and have the same divine warrant for their authority. In support of this view we have presented two broad grounds of argument, and in connection therewith have removed some objections. We now proceed to our third reason.

3. When the New Testament speaks of official $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\theta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$, they could not have been all preachers, because, no matter how small the church, we always read of a plurality of them. Thus, in the little new churches planted in Asia Minor by Paul and Barnabas, “they ordained elders in every church” (Acts xiv. 23). Paul “sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church” (Acts xx. 17). Writing to the Christians at Philippi (ch. i. 1), he addresses the $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$ (plural) and deacons. Titus (ch. i. 5) was to “ordain elders in every city” in Crete. Now, the argument is, and it is irresistible, that many of these primitive churches were too small to need or admit the stated labors of more than one preacher, and too weak to support them. Yet they always had more than one $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\theta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ or $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$. Therefore some of them must have been ruling elders. This is so convincing that the *Repertory* seeks to evade it by saying that all the primitive churches had more than one preacher, and had use for them. Some of the churches, as Jerusalem and Antioch, were so large that they employed many preachers at home. This we grant (see Acts xiii. 1). But as to the vast majority of the primitive churches we utterly deny it. Many of them were evidently the handfuls of Christians collected by the first labors of the apostles, and meeting in private houses. History tells us that the little island of Crete had one hundred “cities;” that is, walled towns, of which the most were nothing more than villages; yet Titus was to ordain a plurality of elders in every one of these where there were Christians. This is so obvious that a further gratuitous supposition is made as to them, that the churches, though very small, were each of them *foeci* of mission-

ary labors for the surrounding pagans, so that they employed many preachers in itinerant journeys, etc., and these preachers were the plurality of elders. The answer is, that these little churches were indeed, when situated in large cities, *foci* of missionary operations, but the regular officer for conducting them was the evangelist, not the local presbyter. It is Stephen, Philip the evangelist, and the apostles, not the elders of the Jerusalem church, of whom we hear as officially extending the gospel around about. This is further strengthened by the fact that when we read the qualifications of these presbyter bishops in 1 Timothy iii. and Titus i. we read nothing of any itinerancy or mission, but all the functions are permanent and local. In the case of the church of Ephesus (Acts xx. 17), it is not the elders resident in the city of Ephesus, but the "*elders of the church*," who are addressed. They not only lived there, but *their charge was there*. The idea of their being the missionaries of the whole surrounding region is inconsistent with their local duties, and with the commands the apostle proceeds (vs. 28, etc.,) to lay on them. The *Repertory* is so pressed with this case that it adopts the untenable ground that these elders were, no doubt, not all from Ephesus proper, but from all the affiliated churches around. On this evasion we remark, first, that it is the very one adopted by prelatists, on this passage, to escape the irresistible argument against diocesan power and the three orders of ministers. For in verses 28, 29, the apostle identifies presbyters with bishops, and, moreover, gives to these local officers all the power which prelatists claim for their diocesans. We do not thank the *Repertory* for thus betraying to the enemy one of our tried Presbyterian bulwarks! Its misrepresentation of the passage places it in very bad company—company with which it has been little wont to consort. But "politics make strange bed-fellows." Second, we rebut the explanation by the fact that the text states, "Paul sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church." "The church" is singular. Now, that usage of the word in the singular, which is so common among us to express the associated churches over a whole province, as the "Presbyterian Church in North Carolina," is utterly unknown in the New Testament. In all such cases the word is used in the plural, *churches*, without a single variation in all the New Testament. The church of Ephesus can mean nothing but the local church literally resi-

dent in Ephesus. All those $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota-\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$, who were elders of it, were local officers, with a local charge, "a flock" (not flocks, vs. 28,) over which the Holy Ghost made them $\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\pi\omicron\iota$. All of them, of course, were not preachers.

But this is so clear that, most of the able Congregationalists even—who in practice discard ruling elders—such as Drs. Davidson and Wardlaw, admit that there was a plurality of presbyters in every ancient church. But, they urge, their qualifications and functions, and, therefore, their ordination, were evidently all the same ; and the Presbyterians err in making a permanent distinction between the two species of elders in the same church. We may add, that this is just the assertion made by the writer in the *Central Presbyterian* of September 17, 1859, who calls himself Cramer, and to whom the *Repertory* refers triumphantly as having shown up the extravagances in which our theory of the eldership must legitimately result. Now we rejoin, with Dr. King, of Scotland, that this notion of a college of presbyters in every church, large and small, all exercising all the same functions, is practically impossible. Can any one believe, that where there was enough work of inspection to occupy five or six men, and only enough public preaching to occupy one or two, all would still continue to preach ? Would not difference of gifts, of popularity, and of taste, soon throw the preaching work wholly into the hands of one or two ? Would not the good brother who was slow of speech, and whose rising usually helped to empty the church of hearers, while he saw it crowded whenever his more fluent brother-presbyter preached, be irresistibly impelled to give up public preaching, and limit himself to the functions of rule and inspection, in performing which he was useful, happy, and respectable ? Is it ever so easy to get preachers of good capacity that several of them can be found in each congregation ? Let our Congregational brethren, or our brother Cramer, try it ; he would soon find that his plurality of preaching elders would slide into the Presbyterian usage, one or two of the best qualified doing the preaching, and the rest the ruling.

This is so obvious that Dr. Davidson and others are compelled to admit that, while the presbyters of the congregation were all officially equal, all entitled to the same functions, and all ordained to the same functions, a part of them would, per-

haps in every case, practically surrender the public preaching to the more gifted brethren, and content themselves with rule and watch over the members. But, now, is not this admission equivalent to a surrender of the whole point? It represents Jesus Christ and his apostles as instituting for the church a plan which would be found in every case impracticable in its working, and as looking forward to this disgraceful state of things, that there should be in every church a set of officers partially incapable and recreant to their ordination vows. And this would not be the guilty exceptional case occurring here and there, and when occurring to be strictly chastised, but the regular, normal state of things, to be everywhere expected and everywhere tolerated. Who can believe this? And on this theory we should have to explain 1 Tim. v. 17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in word and doctrine," after this fashion: "The elders who fulfil well a part of their ordination vows, and are wickedly recreant to the rest, count worthy of double honor, especially they who are recreant to none." Shall we put such nonsense into St. Paul's mouth? Would not the honest old hero infallibly have said that the men who do their whole duty are worthy of double honor; but the men who neglect a part, although appointed by the Holy Spirit to all the same work, and solemnly sworn to perform it, are worthy only of shame and punishment? Since, then, the idea of a numerous college of preaching elders in every small congregation is practically absurd and impossible, as our adversaries themselves concede, we must suppose, even were there no proof in the Scriptures, that Christ *intended two species of elders*, and did not merely connive at them; that he appointed two species, and that they had different tasks, different vows, and somewhat different ordinations.

4. But there are proofs in the Scripture. Let the reader bear in mind that the question now in hand is not simply whether it is scriptural to have ruling elders, but whether these ruling elders are among the *official, ordained presbyters* of the Scriptures. He will then understand the fairness of the application we make of our proof texts. And we claim, first, that all the passages by which we have proved a plurality of ordained presbyters in every church, even the smallest, show that ruling elders were among them, because we have evinced that all could not have been

preaching elders. Next, in Rom. xii. 6-8, we have an enumeration of the "parts" or "members" of the ecclesiastical body. "Having then gifts" (*charisms*) "differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry" (*deaconship*) "let us wait on our ministry; or he that teacheth" (the preacher) "on teaching; or he that exhorteth on exhortation" (the temporary gift); "he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity" (probably the deacon again); "he that ruleth" (the ruling elder) "with diligence," etc. Now, these functions are spoken of as belonging to different men. We have "gifts *differing according to the grace that is given to us.*" There would seem to be, then, an officer who ruled, but did not prophecy, nor teach, nor publicly exhort, nor perform a deaconship. We will candidly say, however, that we would not esteem the evidence in this passage conclusive by itself, because there seems an uncertainty whether some of the clauses in the enumeration may not be intended to describe private unofficial performances, such as those of the master of a family and the private benefactor of the destitute. Let us, then, add to it 1 Cor. xii. 28, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." This enumeration contains all the church officers, temporary and permanent. Of the former class are the apostles, prophets, miracle workers, and miraculous speakers of foreign languages here mentioned; of the latter class are the teachers or preachers, the deacons ("helps"), and the rulers ("governments"). Now, there is no mistake here as to the apostle's intending official functions, for he says, "God hath *set them in the church.*" Nor is there any doubt as to the ruling office other than that of the teacher, for he says, "*after that . . . helps, governments,*" etc. But it may be objected, that the apostle does not in these texts call these "governments" official presbyters. We grant it; but this is our argument from these passages, that we here find an order of rulers other than preachers, among the divinely appointed officers of the church; and on the other hand, we defy any one to show us, in all the enumerations of the Acts and Epistles, and among all the records of the uninspired apostolic church, any names of permanent offices except these three, preacher or angel, presbyter, and deacon. These

“governments,” then, must be identified with one of the three. The texts themselves distinguish them from the teaching office. Will the *Repertory* endeavor to identify them with the deacon? Hardly. They must be identified with the presbyter.

But a more direct argument may be found in the passage already quoted from 1 Tim. v. 17. That the reader may have it before his eyes, we will repeat it: “Let the elders (ἐπρεσβύτεροι) that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor; especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.” Now, we can hardly suppose that it will be necessary to repeat here for Presbyterian readers the argument for the correct exposition of this verse. All who understand it fairly, including even some learned Episcopalians, admit that it shows us a class of ἐπρεσβύτεροι who rule well; and another *partly different* species of ἐπρεσβύτεροι, who, in addition to ruling well, labor in word and doctrine. And these last are the preachers, or ministers, so called in modern phrase. It is true that several evasions, characterized by a wriggling lubricity worthy of eels, have been proposed; but they have been all so crushed by the irresistible answers of Drs. Owen, Dick, and others, that we need do no more here than refer the reader to those writers. Now the elders who rule well, and the elders who also labor in word and doctrine, are here contrasted. The one class are called ἐπρεσβύτεροι, precisely as the other class are. The writer in the *Repertory* attempts to escape by saying that ruling elders, when called ἐπρεσβύτεροι in the Scriptures, are called so only in the general, and not in the official sense; only as a title of seniority and respect, not of technical office-power. And the *Review* (July number, 1860, page 562) relates a passage between Dr. Thornwell and its editor in the last Assembly, in which the former asked whether the latter “admitted that the elder was a presbyter. Dr. Hodge rejoined by asking Dr. Thornwell whether he admitted that the apostles were deacons. He answered, No. But, says Dr. Hodge, Paul says he was a *διάκονος*. O, says Dr. Thornwell, ‘that was in the general sense of the word.’ Precisely so; if the answer was good in the one case it is good in the other.”

But, say we, it is not good in the other case. Here we have, in 1 Tim. v. 17, the ruling elder called ἐπρεσβύτερος in the same sentence and in the same sense with the preaching elder. How postposterous is it in an interpreter to change the meaning of a

word thus arbitrarily in passing from one clause to another of the same sentence? If the ruling elder is not here called *πρεσβύτερος* in the proper, technical, official sense, then neither is the preacher a *πρεσβύτερος* in that sense; if it is a mere general title of respect in the one case, it is so in the other. A similar evasion of the proper presbyterial character of the ruling elder is attempted by the *Repertory's* correspondent in the passage at 1 Pet. v. 1. "The *πρεσβύτεροι* which are among you I exhort, who am also a *πρεσβύτερος*," etc. Here Peter, says the reviewer, calls himself a *πρεσβύτερος* in the same breath with the elders. But as he was an elder only in the general sense, so are they. Nay, then, the bishops also, who alone, according to him, are proper elders, are but generally so, for in the next verse Peter exhorts these same elders to act as *ἐπίσκοποι* of the churches—rendered in the English Version, "taking the oversight thereof." The truth is, Peter was actually and properly a presbyter, for the apostle's office included all inferior ones within it. And these elders were properly presbyters and *ἐπίσκοποι*.

Again, the Epistle to the Philippians begins with these words, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are Philippi, with the bishops (*ἐπισκόποις*) and deacons, (*διακόνους*)." Where is the mention here of the ruling elders? It was obviously the apostle's intention to send his greeting to all the church members at Philippi, and to their officers. He mentions even the deacons. Hence it is hard to suppose that the elders are omitted, unless we are willing to hold them more insignificant than the deacons. Nearly all respectable commentators accordingly understand that they are included under the title *ἐπισκόποις*; that is, that they, as truly as the preacher or preachers, were inspectors or bishops. But all agree that *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* are the same thing; therefore the ruling elder is a presbyter.

5. We now proceed to sustain the same assertion by this fifth argument, that unless we find the office of the ruling elder in the proper, regularly ordained *ἐπίσκοπος* or *πρεσβύτερος* of the New Testament, we have no sufficient warrant whatever from Scripture for the office. One would think, indeed, from the zeal displayed by the writer in the *Repertory* to drag down the supports and dignities of the elder's office, that it would be a result not very much to be regretted to find that it had no Scripture warrant

at all. But he says that he does regard it as a scriptural office, and finds the warrant for it in the term "governments," in 1 Cor. xii. 28. Now, we have shown that the "governments" of that passage, and Rom. xii. 8, are no other than the presbyters of Acts xx., and the ἐπίσκοποι of Phil. i. 1. These "governments," which the *Repertory* condescendingly admits to be the ruling elders of Scripture, must, from the very term, have been rulers. But now, in Acts xx., in 1 Tim. iii., and in Titus i., we find the ruling functions distinctly and repeatedly given to the *presbyter*—ἐπίσκοποι. By this argument also the "governments" must be among the presbyters.

Again: It is uniformly admitted by the whole multitude of Presbyterian writers, and by many even of Lutherans and Episcopalians, that in the apostolic church there were *but three names* of permanent church officers—the preacher or angel, the presbyters and the deacons. The whole testimony of uninspired antiquity is, that in the church of the first and second centuries there were but three offices permanently known in the church—bishops, presbyters and deacons. (The reader must understand that in the uninspired writings the scriptural language was speedily corrupted by depriving the bench of elders of their proper title of ἐπίσκοποι, *bishops* or *inspectors*, and restricting it to the presiding pastor and preacher, who is in the Scriptures called "the angel of the church." So that, when we use the word *bishop* in the singular number, in stating the usages of these primitive Christians, we shall now be understood as meaning by it that to which they improperly restricted it, the preacher of the congregation.) Now, then, Clement of Rome, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, written in the first century, mentions none but presbyters and deacons. The Ignatian Epistles, supposed by some to be almost as early, mention no officer but the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons. Irenæus, writing before the end of the second century, mentions no others. In one word, there is not one line nor syllable of authentic historical evidence that the apostolic church ever had any other permanent officers than these three. We well know that uninspired history is not infallible, that it is not authoritative; but surely when we find our view concerning the state of facts under the apostles so confirmed by the indisputable state of facts immediately after them, it gives strong proof that our view is correct.

And these early testimonies all say that originally bishop and presbyter were the same; that the bishop, even after his elevation over the bench of elders, was but a *primus inter pares*, but a presiding presbyter over his peers, and that these presbyters had a presbyterial ordination to office by the laying on of hands, and were universally esteemed as truly *clergymen* as the preachers. Moreover, in some of these testimonies the relations between the bishop and presbyters is minutely described, and we find it to be precisely what the relation between the pastor, as we call him, and his session now is, abating a little for dawning superstitions. The pretended Epistles of Ignatius, bishop of the church in Antioch, have been mentioned. He fell a martyr very early in the second century. It has always been doubted whether these Epistles were not either compiled or changed by some later hand; and the recent discovery of a disagreeing Syriac copy is said greatly to strengthen that suspicion. But if a later and a spurious origin should even be proved for them, our inference from them is rather confirmed than weakened, because it will then appear that the state of things which we assert as the apostolic continued in the church even later than the days of Ignatius. Now, in these Epistles, it is said that the bishop should allow no one to administer the eucharist but himself, nor even to baptize except himself or one deputed by him; that his board of presbyters is his *council*; that it is the bishop's duty to preside in all the meetings for public worship, and to be acquainted with the spiritual state of every individual, "not forgetting the men and maid-servants." How clear that this bishop is what we call the minister of a congregation, and that these presbyters are not preachers, but ruling elders. Yet here is the character of the primitive office.

Now let the reader bear in mind that the *Repertory* teaches, ruling elders are not proper scriptural presbyters at all; that whenever the Scripture says *presbyter* technically it means *preacher*; and that the scriptural warrant for the ruling elder is in the term "governments," which is something else than presbyter, and something lower. But we have proved that the churches of the New Testament knew nothing of any permanent officers but preachers, presbyters and deacons. Now, these governments are not *preachers* surely. None would spurn that supposition more than the *Repertory*. They are not *presbyters*,

says the *Repertory*, and they are not *deacons*. Then they are *nothing*! Verily, the suspicion does not seem very harsh, which many have actually entertained, that this is a category to which this journal would not be very loath to reduce them. But as it has disclaimed such a desire, we will not make the charge. We repeat, however, with emphasis, that unless we find the ruling elders among the scriptural presbyters, we can find no scriptural warrant for them at all. They are either that or they have no business in our church organization. Let them be "*aut Cæsar, aut nihil*."

The reader will now see the connection between this subject and the question, Is the form of the church's government *jure divino*? We are not of those who would push the notion of a divine warrant to extremes. But if it is true even of the broadest outlines, surely this is a thing which man should not undertake to introduce of his own motion, a new and grand coördinate member into the body which Christ has constructed. Change of circumstances may justify change of minor details; but if a great fundamental branch may be introduced thus into the structure, there is no constitutional limitation whatever. All is absolute license. The Federal government may multiply clerkships or judgeships as the country grows; but if they undertake to add a whole new House to Congress, they have destroyed the constitution. We urge, therefore, that if the views of the *Repertory* concerning the eldership are true, we are bound to go one step farther, and abolish it. It is a human invention, and however convenient or popular, it is rebellion against our Master's better wisdom to introduce so fundamental a modification of his institutions.

6. Perhaps the most plausible objection which the *Review* presents against our theory is this, "that if you teach the ruling elders are among the proper scriptural presbyters, then you can no longer draw any consistent line between them and ministers, but must make them all preachers. The Scriptures make no distinction between any of those whom they call presbyters, either as to qualification or ordination or functions." All alike must be "apt to teach." And we who hold that view ought in consistency to give ruling elders the same ordination with preachers, and encourage them to do all that a preacher may do; a result says the *Repertory*, to which our principles are al-

ready carrying us. In evidence of this, it points to the article of Cramer in the *Central Presbyterian*, to which we have already referred. That writer does indeed argue that conclusion with a force and perspicuity which place his article, although appearing in a weekly newspaper, far before many reviews in importance. Those who wish to see the wrong side forcibly sustained may also consult Dr. Philip Schaff's *Apostolic Church*.

The views already presented against the supposition of Drs. Wardlaw and Davidson bear forcibly on this objection. On the one hand, we have proved that the ruling elders are among the presbyters; and on the other, we have shown that, if they were thereby made a college of preachers in every church, all exercising all the same functions, the practical continuance of the arrangement would be impossible; some of the college would inevitably relinquish their preaching functions, and it is derogatory to the wisdom and holiness of Christ to suppose that he would thus deliberately plan for a general connivance at neglect of official duty.

But it is asserted that the same qualifications are exacted, in 1 Tim. iii., and Titus i., of all presbyters alike, and especially "aptness to teach," "that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Hence, if ruling elders are actual presbyters, they should all be preachers. In reply, we remark that all will admit that ruling elders do need all the qualifications, such as good Christian character, orthodoxy, temperance, prudence, domestic authority, etc., which the preachers need except this "aptness to teach." And as to this, we assert that the ruling elder needs it also just as truly as the preacher does, although not in the same phase, even if he is never to preach in public. It has been well remarked in support of this assertion, that the ruling elder should preach the gospel from house to house, that he should be the private instructor of all inquirers, that he should be a catechist and Bible-class teacher. This is all true, but it comes very far short of the true strength of the case. Limit the ruling elder's task as strictly as is possible to the business of ruling, and still his function is just as truly and as purely a *teaching function* as that of the preacher. He rules only by teaching; that is, his whole authority is exercised through an inculcative process. The only power exercised in church government is spiritual power; this power regards

each man as a free agent, possessed of the right of private judgment, and hence its only support is that of didactic evidence. The church has legitimate power over the conscience only as she presents to that conscience, in the exercise of its own private judgment, what ought to be adequate evidence that her command is scriptural. The sceptre of Christ's kingdom is his word; *to wield this is to teach*. And we would distinctly declare, that our tendency to consider that teaching must mean preaching alone arises only from our over-weening and unscriptural fondness for public preaching over the quiet, efficacious inculcation of the spiritual inspector. Had we used Christ's plan more efficiently we should not have contracted this perverted notion. Were ruling elders what they ought to be we should perhaps find that, so far from regarding preaching as nearly all of religious teaching, it is less than half. But we repeat, to rule is to teach; and therefore the ruling elder should be "apt to teach," though he is never to mount the pulpit.

Again, it is objected, that the Scriptures indicate no such distinction of work and title as we make between the preaching presbyter and the ruling presbyter; that as their qualifications are required to be the same, so no difference seems to be held forth in the work assigned them. This we positively deny. In Rom. xii. 8, and 1 Cor. xii. 28, we found the "governing" mentioned as a gift, a *charism*, bestowed on others than those who had the gifts of preaching. In 1 Tim. v. 17, a clear distinction is implied between those who rule well, and those who also "labor in word and doctrine." And in Revelation, the closing book of the canon, where we would naturally expect to see the apostolic institutions in their matured form, we hear each church representatively addressed by its "angel." After all the thorny discussions as to the interpretation of this term, there is none so natural and tenable as that which makes the angel, in imitation of the well-known order and use of titles in the synagogue, the preaching presbyter, who presided over his brethren the presbyters, and was the public mouth-piece, or messenger, of the church to God, and of God to the church. So that we do assert, the distinction between the titles and tasks of the preaching and ruling presbyters, while yet both are proper presbyters, is as plain in the New Testament as could be expected.

It is also urged against us, that there should be but one ordination, if we were consistent, for both species of elders. Well, what if we grant it? That is, we grant, yea, we strongly assert, that the appointment and induction of the ruling elder ought to be by a laying on of hands, which is generally and truly a *presbyterial ordination* as much as that of the preacher. But it does not follow hence that it shall be done in the same kind of presbytery. The ruling elder should be ordained in the parochial presbytery, the session, for reasons which we shall state anon, while the preacher is ordained in the district presbytery. The usage of inducting the elder into office by the mere *appointing power of the preacher*, is one introduced wholly by those hostile to the true theory. Is it not the rankest logical injustice, that we should be made inconsistent because of the inconsistency of this usage of theirs which we condemn?

We may be told, that even if elders were ordained by the laying on of the hands of the session, and held to be scriptural presbyters, still the usage of the modern Presbyterian Church does practically widen the space between the preacher and the elder more than the usages of the apostolic church. We reply, we grant it; and we can show a consistent reason why it should be so. Even if it were proved that, in the days of Paul and John, the same parochial presbytery which ordained the ruling elder also ordained the preacher (which was probably the case), we can show a consistent reason for the difference we now make. Jesus Christ has ordained that all elders shall be "apt to teach." Suppose we were in the primitive church at Thessalonica, Corinth, or Ephesus, and were about to elect from among the reputable and educated Christian gentlemen of that town a ruling elder and a preacher. We should find that the sole difference of qualification we would need to seek in the preacher above the elder would be the gift of fluent and perspicuous public speech. As to all else, the same general Christian experience and Bible intelligence which would suffice for the elder would suffice for the preacher. For we pray the reader to note, there is this important difference between our condition of religious intelligence in the nineteenth century and theirs: Then the language of the New Testament was their living vernacular; now it is a dead and a difficult language, only partially understood by the learned. Then all those political facts, social usages, religious opinions

and parties, which must be comprehended in order to understand the allusions of Scripture language, were living familiar realities, as common and well-understood by the child as household furniture; now they are mostly passed away for long centuries, and are only regained by the painful and learned study of archaeology. For these and similar reasons, we doubt not that the common, educated, Christian gentleman of Thessalonica stood on a better platform for the work of expounding the Scriptures to his brethren than that to which young ministers are raised by a careful classical and theological education. All this modern training does but put the preacher back where every educated Christian stood in apostolic days, and repair the thefts of biblical knowledge made by time and change. And this is true for another reason; not only was it much easier for that ancient educated man to understand the Greek Scriptures, it was much easier for his brethren to understand his easy explanations of them, because they also were Greeks. "But does not all this go to prove," the objector will say, "that all the ruling elders should now be put through a college and seminary also?" "Did you just now say that the ruling work also was a teaching work?" We answer: the conclusion does not follow as to the elder, because it is impossible for the church to give this training to enough men to fill all her eldership, and it is unnecessary. It is necessary that a part of the presbyters shall, in each generation, keep up this archaeological and biblical learning. But while there is a large learned class among them, the results of their literary industry will diffuse among the others who are not archaeologists, nor critical expositors, such a sound and just understanding of their English Bible as will make them also apt to teach. Now, in order that we may be certain to have this trained class of biblical scholars among the presbyters, we must have *some regular plan*, some regular legislation, enjoining that *some persons* shall belong to it; and there is no plan more convenient, or more consonant to the spirit of the New Testament than to require that *at least* the preaching presbyters in each session shall belong to it. If others of the elders besides them can attain to this lettered class, very well; the more the better.

We have unavoidably detained the reader so long with this discussion that we shall now briefly hurry to a close, by reviewing some historical assertions and some corollaries from the subject

advanced by those who differ with us. We find them drawing largely upon the history of the Reformed churches, asserting that the ruling elder, where introduced, was never considered properly a presbyter; that he was never ordained by imposition of hands, and that our doctrine is a novelty. We retort, that it is only a novelty in the sense in which Protestantism was a novelty to Rome, because it was so very old that the subsequent accretions of error had covered it up a good while from sight.

We are not at all concerned to discuss the assertion, that Calvin, that the Reformed divines generally, that the Westminster, and first and second Scotch Books of Government, are against us. But we merely enter our *caveat* with the reader, warning him that these sweeping statements are far from being accurate. So far is it from being true, for instance, that the ordination of ruling elders by imposition of hands was a thing unknown among the Reformed churches; it was uniformly practiced in the Presbyterian churches under John a Lasco in London, during the reign of King Edward VI., and in those of the Bohemian Brethren, from which Dr. Miller thinks Calvin borrowed the idea of ruling elders.

But our answer is this, that the precedents of most of the early Reformers are no authority in this argument in favor of our opponents, because they no more dare to justify them than we do. The ruling elders in the Genevan Church of Calvin were appointed by the senate of the Republic. They served for one year only. Those in the early Scotch churches were appointed either by the minister or the squire of the parish. Those in the French and Dutch churches were appointed to serve only for a limited time. Does the *Repertory* say that these are Presbyterian or scriptural usages? Does it defend them? Does it not know that here we have *prima facie* evidence that the New Testament was not accurately comprehended and enforced on this point at that time? Then it is utterly unfair to use these precedents against us when it does not dare to defend them itself. The precedents are certainly wrong, whether we are right or not, and therefore they cannot prove that we are wrong. The truth is, the proper functions and nature of the office of presbyter, as distinguished from minister, had been so utterly lost in the Romish—the prevalent—Church for so many centuries, the proper representative independence of the church in choosing

its pastors was so nearly unknown among the Reformed churches themselves—(the systems of the Swiss, the German, the Dutch, the Westminster, and the Scotch churches, were all devised with express reference to a union of church and state)—and the reforms had to be carried out among so many political difficulties, that the Reformers plainly had no chance to attain unto the full scriptural system at first. It would have been almost miraculous if they had. Hence we do not bow to their crude, incipient opinions here.

But the reviewer would indicate that our own Book of Government is against us. And what do you suppose, kind reader, is the proof? That the title presbyter is applied in the Book of Government only to preachers. Whereas the only place where the word occurs at all, so far as we know, in the Book of Government makes it identical with the word elder (Chap. IV.); so that, according to the showing of the book itself, we are justified in calling a ruling elder properly and strictly a *ruling presbyter*. The other argument is, that in Chap. III. the book speaks of them as “representatives of the people, *usually styled* ruling elders,” the meaning of which, the reviewer insinuates, is that our constitution makers would not call them so if they could help it, but that popular prejudice would have it so. This is really funny, that the constitution embodies in its text a title which it does not believe in, adds in Chap. V. that the use of this title is sustained by the common understanding of “a great part of the Protestant Reformed churches,” and sustains it by a proof text. And that text, too, is 1 Tim. v. 17, the very one from which we proved that elders are presbyters in the strict official sense.

In the next place, we find the contributor and editor of the *Review* concurring emphatically in the assertion, that the ruling elder is but a *simple layman* after his appointment. He should not have, they think, any presbyterial ordination, and he is admitted to sit in all the presbyterial courts only as a layman to represent the people. Preachers alone are presbyters, in their view, and hence they alone are essential to the constituting of any presbyterial court, from the highest to the lowest. Ruling elders are mere incidentals; very convenient and useful ones, indeed, but still incidentals. And the sole argument for the assertion of the lay character of the elders is as astonishing as the assertion itself, that if they did not continue laymen after their

assumption of the representative function, the laity would be unrepresented, the government of the church would be all clerical, and therefore hierarchical and anti-republican. This is all, except the argument that elders ought not to be ordained, which we have already set aside.

Now, if the *Review* means by the word clergy that which is popularly meant by the words *Rev.* or *parson*, addressed to a preacher, a person who preaches in public and administers sacraments and marriages, we grant an elder is not a clergyman. And if the word is understood to mean what Rome understands by it—one who intervenes authoritatively as a human mediator, a *priest*, between God and the layman's soul—then the elder is not a clergyman; but neither is the preacher. But if we understand by *clergy* what the primitive church meant by the word, Christ's portion or *κληρος*, a class of servants set apart by divine command, by laying on of hands, and separated from the rest for a sacred service of divine appointment in the church, then elders are as much clergy as preachers. They were uniformly called so by the primitive church, for in every enumeration of clergy we ever saw in early history the three species are bishops, presbyters and deacons, and if we exclude the subordinate orders of sub-deacons, lectors, etc., which all admit to be of human origin, these are the only original species. If, then, elders are not among those presbyters who are clergy in the view of the primitive church, they are nowhere.

Again Elders are entitled to ordination. All the presbyters in Scripture were ordained by the laying on of hands, and if we do not include ruling elders among them, we should have none at all. Even deacons should be ordained by laying on of hands, so that if you deny this right to elders, they are placed even beneath deacons. Indeed, the whole drift of the discussions in the *Review* seems to be to reduce the elder to a position for which no form of address would be so appropriate as that of "his accidency."

Last: The peculiar function of the ruling elder is as truly sacred, as truly of divine appointment, and as truly essential to the church's spiritual state, as those of preaching and setting forth sacraments. We say not of *equal* importance and utility.

But let us look at the logic of the reasoning, that the elder must remain a simple layman, otherwise he could not repre-

sent laymen ; his elevation to the clergy would leave the Presbytery a pure hierarchy. These preaching presbyters must be a superhuman set of beings indeed, that the elevation to their class dignity renders the elder incapable of longer representing his common fellow-mortals ! The governor of North Carolina, when inaugurated, is made a *magistrate*, and is no longer a simple citizen ; therefore he does not derive his power by delegation from his fellow-citizens, and North Carolina is not a republic, but a despotism ! The head-man, when deputed by his fellow-servants to go into the parlor to ask the master for a holiday, washed his face and put on his Sunday clothes ; therefore he cannot represent the “ great unwashed ” outside the house ! But let us see whether this logic does not cut against its authors with the force of a terrible, yet just, *argumentum ad hominem*. “ If the order of laity is represented only by an order of clergy, the church court becomes a hierarchy.” “ We thank thee, Jew, for that word.” Then, the *Princeton Review* is in favor of having the Presbyterian Church governed by hierarchies, in which the laity is unrepresented, for it has advocated constantly the doctrine that a Presbytery, a Synod, or a General Assembly may sit and act though there be not an elder in their quorum. Yea, more ; the *Repertory* says that preachers alone—who alone are clergy in its view—are the New Testament presbyters ; that they alone are the essential constituents of presbyterial bodies, and that elders are incidental, and not essential ; so that courts in which no ruling elders sat might, so far as the Scripture binds us, sit legitimately and normally at all times, and not merely when elders happened not to reach the meeting. Hence, it would seem, a pure hierarchical system, an exclusive aristocracy, might legitimately be the government of the church.

The truth is, that the republican nature of a government does not depend on the class of the individuals who hold power, but on the manner in which that power is derived. If it is power delegated by free election from the people, the government is republican. If it is power simply assumed by the class, without consent of the governed, then it is an aristocracy. The House of Lords is an aristocratic feature in the British commonwealth. But the fact that some men elected by the people to the House of Commons are of the order of hereditary nobles does not render that house an aristocracy.

Here, it may be remarked, is the legitimate tendency of the doctrine held by the *Repertory* upon the celebrated "Elder Question." If ruling elders are presbyters, then they are a constituent and essential part of presbyteries. This view has at last forced for itself an admission from the common sense of all. And now we have a virtual concession, in the line of argument followed by these two essays, that the only way to avoid admitting the conclusion is to deny that ruling elders are presbyters. We are glad that this fact is plainly brought out at last, so that when next our church shall agitate these questions, which are now left in so unsatisfactory a condition, it may be well understood on all hands, that in order to deprive elders of their position, as has been done, this theory must be held, viz., "Elders are not presbyters; they have no ordination; they are but simple laymen; a church and church courts might possess their essential substance and constitution without any elders at all; and their functions are all embodied and represented in the legitimate powers of the preachers, who on their part do not hold their power by delegation from the church over which they rule, but by their own order." Well; now the cloven foot is out at last!

In this connection, too, we may notice the surprising attempts made to claim the credit of Dr. Miller's name and countenance on this subject by men who seek to overthrow every one of his characteristic opinions about it. The reviewer says, that although Dr. Miller once thought ruling elders should be ordained by laying on of hands, he receded from the opinion when better advised. No. He says in his treatise that he receded from the *practice*, because he found that some captious persons among brother ministers were disposed to make strife concerning it, but that he was all the time of the same opinion that the practice was right, and ought to be universal. If he afterwards changed his opinion also, we have seen no proof of it; and we must be pardoned for candidly saying we do not believe it. Again, the editor of the *Review* says in the article, "What is Presbyterianism?" that there is no difference between him and Dr. Miller, save that he arrives at the same conclusions by a different path from Dr. Miller's. Yet Dr. Miller teaches that the ruling elder is properly a presbyter; the editor believes that he is not. Dr. Miller believes that he is, among the persons called

in Scripture ἐπίσκοποι and πρεσβυτέρους; the editor does not. Dr. Miller believes that he is entitled to a presbyterial ordination by his peers; the editor believes that he is not. Dr. Miller believes that he is truly and properly of the *clergy*; the editor believes that he is nothing but a simple layman. Is this substantial agreement? For our part, it is hard for us to conceive a more complete antithesis. It may suit a forensic purpose to represent the views of the eldership which we advocate as rash novelties; but the truth is, they are correct scriptural views, into which the great family of Presbyterian churches have been steadily emerging from the clouds of Erastianism and state-bondage which hung over their early years; the views which were at length explicitly avowed in our Book of Government and by the founders of our church in America; the views to which that wise, conservative and learned man, the first Presbyterian professor of church polity in our denomination, deliberately committed himself during the whole of his professional life.

In conclusion, we would present summarily the ground which exists in the real wants of mankind and of the church for the office of the ruling elder; for we feel assured that the most practical and forcible way to convince men of the true dignity and proper clerical and presbyterial character of the office is to show the essential necessity of the work. All agree that the great function of the church is *to redeem mankind* through gospel truth. In this work every church member is to consider himself personally enlisted; but the church as an association, as an organized whole, is also to devote itself wholly to it. For performing this work God has appointed in his church three species of functions, that of the preacher or accredited public ambassador for God, that of the inspector, and that of the deacon. The fact that such official organs are ordained of God to hold forth these functions is no reason why each member in his personal capacity should not labor at all of them in a general sense, teaching his fellow-man, watching over his fellow-man for good, and ministering to his fellow-man's necessities as he has opportunity, as parent, neighbor, master, friend, teacher, fellow-citizen. But the official execution of these three great functions is also absolutely necessary to the church's success. Our present purpose is to illustrate the importance of the second; and the idea of

that function is precisely that expressed by the New Testament title for the office, *ἐπίσκοπος*, *the inspector*, of the knowledge and demeanor of the individuals of the flock. Now, since it is so easy for men to "hold the truth in unrighteousness," or in modern phrase to be theoretically right and practically wrong; since we are required to be "not hearers of the word only, but doers;" since the influence of habit is so potent for good and for evil, and habits are only formed in detail, it is obvious that the detailed inspection and oversight is not less truly essential to the flock than the public exposition of saving truth. And this is what experience confirms. It confirms it, alas! by the sad lessons of our defects, showing us how generally large masses of intelligent and respectable communicants remain almost totally inefficient and without spiritual progress, although provided with excellent preaching. The inspectors are lacking. The fact is, that the preaching and ordinances of the Presbyterian Church are good and scriptural; yet another fact is undeniable, that the energies of our membership for the world's conversion are almost dormant compared with what they might be. We protest that Christ did not intend this to be so; we assert that a far different standard of lay efficiency is practicable, without setting up any Utopian expectations; that it has been maintained in the primitive church, and that it must be reached again to render the millennium possible. Do men say, "Alas, yes; but the great cause is human depravity?" I reply, this is the ultimate source of the evil, but there is a proximate cause also; for be it remembered, Jesus Christ constructed his church to be efficient, though made out of depraved human nature. Will he have any other material to construct the millennium church with? The proximate cause is that we do not work his appointed organism. The preaching, we repeat, in our established congregations, does tolerably well. One of the main things lacking is the appointed inspection. The Scriptures themselves compare the church to an army. Now, the best field officers in the world will never make an army fight well unless they have enough good subalterns to attend to the squad exercise and discipline. The details of the military art can only be learned in detail; the field officers cannot teach all the privates, because they are relatively too few. Now, the inspectors are the *squad officers* of the spiritual host. The preachers cannot do their work of detail. Without them the church is

but a religious mob, not a disciplined spiritual army. They are essential to teach the habitual practice of the holy art of Christian warfare, and to enforce every man's activity in battle.

See how the conscious, the felt wants of the Christian world, have impelled them to attempt in various ways to find a substitute for this neglected, but all-essential function. The Wesleyan invents a class-leader, who oversees and instructs his class. Here is precisely the ruling elder's work. The great temperance movement in the Christian world at length shapes itself into the order of the Sons of Temperance, because it was practically felt that without an agency for benevolent oversight, the reclaimed would be lost to the cause of temperance about as fast as they were won. Hence the extensive and complex organization of this order, to seek out the inebriate, to watch over the reclaimed and see that they keep their vow, to report backsliders, and to restore the lapsed. Well, all this is just the ruling elder's work, and if Christ's agency had been faithfully employed, good men would never have felt the need of Sons of Temperance in any place where there was a church, because this would have been of itself the very best temperance society. Again, a well-meaning Christian invents the "Young Men's Christian Association," intended to sustain in towns and other populous places a regular agency for seeking out young men, for bringing them into houses of worship and under wholesome influences, for giving saving advice against temptation at the very moment of danger, for watching over their morals and restoring their falls. And the institution has run like a prairie-fire throughout the Protestant countries. Well, all this is just the ruling elder's work. Had Christians acted on Christ's plan in his church, there would have been no need for such a society, because the church itself would have been found the best, and the sufficient "Christian Association" for young men and old men, and for young and old women too. Let us not be understood as opposing the well-intended exertions of the friends of these associations. The church may, perhaps, thank them under the circumstances, that they are piously striving to supply her lack of service. But it is a crying evidence of her misunderstanding and neglect of her divine plan, that outside agencies should have to be patched up by human invention to do her proper work.

In this way many striking illustrations might be found, showing how important, and at once how little understood, is the function of the inspector. Now, let us connect with this two facts, and our practical view of the elder's office will be perceived. First: one man can preach efficiently to a great many more people than he can inspect, just as one field-officer can *command* many more men than he can possibly *drill*. Second: In the usual course of providence, the church can find many more men who have qualifications for inspectors than of those who are able to preach. Now shall she say, with the *Repertory*, nobody shall be *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπίσκοπος* but the preachers? This is equivalent to saying that, because a man cannot also preach, he shall not be ordained—receive Jesus Christ's appointment and authority—to inspect. And yet the church *needs* five inspectors to one preacher, needs them just as essentially as the preachers; and the church can get the material for five inspectors to one preacher if she will do her duty. The true, the divine wisdom, in economizing all the efficiency of the material, then, is to have an order of inspectors, clothed with all the proper sacred authority, who shall not be required to preach, and then to have with them a smaller number of inspectors who can and do preach.

THIS IS PRESBYTERIANISM.

ON DANGEROUS READING.¹

AS it is always my wish to attain directness and practical utility in what I have to say, I will explain that, under the name of *dangerous* books, I mean now to attack particularly the usual kinds of fictitious narratives, novels, impure sentimental poetry, and biographies, whether accurate or not, of criminal and degraded characters. It is supposed that these are the sources from which present danger to my readers is most to be feared. Books professedly teaching error in religion, morals, or social concerns, are of course evil and dangerous. But they are open enemies. They are not usually surrounded with peculiar fascinations when set forth in the didactic form; they will not gain much favor with those who read the *Watchman and Observer*, who may be presumed to respect and believe a sounder system. I would aim rather at covert and insidious enemies, which profess only to amuse while they destroy; which say, "Am I not in sport," while they "scatter firebrands, arrows, and death."

Against all the usual kinds of fictitious histories, whether in prose or verse, and dramatic representations, there are two great objections, even though they be allowed to be pure, free from criminal traits and pictures, and free from false principles—

1. To do what they profess to do, to give a correct picture of human life and character in a fictitious narrative, is extremely difficult. To paint the springs of conduct and the passions in their causes and effects, to draw correctly the results in the life proceeding from dispositions in the heart, requires a high wisdom and experience very rarely possessed. It is the attribute of a favored few, whose knowledge of men and things springs from a sound philosophy, has been cultivated by large and varied experience of life, and is guided by a powerful understanding. How vain to expect this rare historic wisdom, only attained in part by one or two in the lapse of centuries—such as a Shakspeare and a Scott—in the pert, shallow, dreaming babblers,

¹ This article appeared in the *Watchman and Observer*, Richmond, Va., 1849.

whose frothy inventions deluge the country! The inexperienced young person who observes the air of simplicity, nature, and ease, that marks the works of the great masters of historic and imaginative literature, may imagine that it is easy to imitate them, and to paint from the fancy scenes as natural as theirs. But it is only ignorance that causes such a supposition. The very ease and naturalness of the narrative shows the exquisite finish and perfection of the work. It is this very ease, simplicity and naturalness that are forever beyond the reach of mediocrity, and are attainable by genius alone. The ignorant stone-cutter, looking at some model of classic beauty from a master's chisel, may imagine that surely he could make a statue like that, so utterly free from exaggeration and point, so exactly like a real man or woman. But his idea only shows his utter ignorance of the sculptor's art. He dreams not that the harmony and truth to nature, the absence of exaggeration, and the softened unity and propriety of the statue are just the qualities which it is most difficult to produce—just the qualities which the master alone can produce.

Thus, also, to draw an imaginary man, like nature in his feelings and his conduct, is the hardest task of literary genius, although the picture, when finished, may seem so simple and easy. It is an exploit utterly beyond the reach of our herd of novelists. I fearlessly assert that, even though their intentions and principles were pure, and their scenes undefiled by pictures of vice, the views of human life and of the human heart which they give would not be true to nature, but unnatural, exaggerated and absurd. They do not truly paint the springs of human conduct and feeling. The men and women who flaunt on their fantastic pages are not the men and women with whom the reader has to deal in real life. And he who suffers his views of life to be colored by such reading, as every novel and play-reader must to some extent, is destined to nothing but blunders, disappointments and disgusts, when he attempts to buffet with the *hard realities* of the world. His course must resemble that of the man who has never beheld visible objects except when distorted by a prism, and fringed with its fantastic hues, until he goes forth to travel through the world. Hence it is that we see so many young gentlemen and young ladies who have learned their views of life out of the delusive mirror of fiction disap-

pointed of their hopes, disgusted with their experience of actual life, and professing what they imagine to be a picturesque sort of Byronic misanthropy, which is in the eyes of all sensible people as contemptible as it is selfish.

The *true history* of the past, on the contrary, gives true and useful views of life, because they are painted from nature. There men are drawn as they really lived and acted. There the youth who would learn from an experience more cheaply purchased than his own, may look for instruction in the character of man, and the ways of the world in which he is to live. Let our readers resort to these wholesome pages, which instruct while they amuse. And especially must I commend those pictures of human life drawn by the finger of inspiration in the sacred Scriptures, as unerring in their accuracy and unequalled in their literary beauty, charming alike the unsophisticated taste of all classes, children and mature men, savages and cultivated masters of learning. The interest they inspire in all, and the inimitable freshness and simplicity of the narratives, contribute not a little to the evidence of the claim that their authors possessed more than human art.

2. The habitual contemplation of fictitious scenes, however pure, produces a morbid cultivation of the feelings and sensibilities, to the neglect and injury of the active virtues. The purpose for which fictions are read, and the drama is frequented, is to excite the attention and the emotions. They must be animated and full of incident, or they will not be popular. The reader who indulges much in them soon becomes so accustomed to having his sensibilities excited, and the labor of attention relieved by the interest of the plot, that he is incapable of useful reading and business. The just, natural, and instructive pages of history seem to him too flat, and he dozes over the most noble exertions of intellect which literature offers. His debauched mind is as unfit for useful studies as the tremulous and enervated arm of the drunkard the morning after his orgies for wholesome labor.

But there is also an injury to the moral character as well as to the habits of mental industry, which is a necessary result of the fundamental laws of feeling. Exercise is the great instrument ordained by God to strengthen the active principles of the heart. On the other hand, all the passive susceptibilities are

worn out and deadened by frequent impressions. Illustrations of these two truths are familiar to every one ; but there is one well-known instance which offers us at once an example of the truth of both of them. It is that of the experienced and benevolent physician. The active principle of benevolence is strengthened by his daily occupations until it becomes a spontaneous and habitual thing in him to respond to every call of distress, regardless of personal fatigue, and to find happiness in doing so. But at the same time, his susceptibilities to the painful impressions of distressing scenes are so deadened that he can act with nerve and coolness in the midst of suffering, the sight of which would at first have unmanned him.

Now, all works of fiction are full of scenes of imaginary distress, which are constructed to impress the sensibilities. The fatal objection to the habitual contemplation of these scenes is this, that while they deaden the sensibilities, they afford no occasion or call for the exercise of *active* sympathies. Thus the feelings of the heart are cultivated into a monstrous, an unnatural, and unamiable disproportion. He who goes forth in the works of active benevolence among the real sufferings of his fellow creatures will have his sensibilities impressed, and at the same time will have opportunity to cultivate the principle of benevolence by *its exercise*. Thus the qualities of his heart will be nurtured in beautiful harmony, until they become an ornament to his character and a blessing to his race. This is God's "school of morals." This is God's plan for developing and training the emotions and moral impulses. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." And the adaptation of this plan of cultivation to the laws of man's nature shows that the inventor is the same wise Being who created man. It is by practicing this precept of the gospel that man is truly humanized. But the beholder of these fictitious sorrows has his sympathies impressed, and therefore deadened, while those sympathies must necessarily remain inert and passive, because the whole scene is imaginary. And thus, by equal steps, he becomes at once *sentimental and inhuman*. While the Christian, whose heart has been trained in the school of duty, goes forth with cheerful and active sympathies in exercises of beneficence towards the real

woes of his neighbor, the novel reader sits weeping over the sorrows of imaginary heroes and heroines, too selfish and lazy to lay down the fascinating volume and reach forth his hand to relieve an actual sufferer at his door.

I have proceeded hitherto upon the supposition that these books are pure in sentiment and description. But they are very rarely so. The vast majority, besides being liable to the objections formerly stated, in their full force, lie under the still more damning charge of moral impurity. Many of them are, in truth, systems of error, covertly embodying and teaching ruinous falsehoods. Some are written for the secret purpose of teaching infidelity, and some to teach the epicurean philosophy. Many of them are the aimless effusions of a general hatred against every thing correct and pious. There may be no professed attack on right principles, probably no didactic discussion at all, in the whole book, and yet the whole may be false philosophy or heresy, teaching by fascinating incident and example. To the thoughtless young, in search of entertainment, it seems to be a tale constructed to amuse, and nothing more, and yet every character represented in it, and all the plan of the book, may be designed to place religion, morality and right principles in a contemptible attitude, and to present the characters who advocate error in an attitude of superiority. How delusive this mode of teaching is, as a test or evidence of truth, can be easily seen. It is perfectly easy to draw two sets of characters, of which those embodying and representing error shall wear the superior, and those representing truth the inferior aspect, when the characters are all fictitious, and the painter is the errorist himself. When the lion and the man, in the old fable, travelling together, came to the picture of a man bestriding a conquered lion, the lion said to his human companion: "Had a lion been the painter of that picture the figures would be inverted." So it is perfectly easy to paint truth at the bottom and error at the top when falsehood holds the brush.

By this means of teaching, treacherous as it is, when regarded as a vehicle of evidence, subtle error is often insinuated into inexperienced minds, which have been educated in the love of truth, and would repel the open approaches of falsehood; of this kind are many modern and professedly pious novels, so current in this country, and especially in England, cunningly teaching Tory

principles and Puseyism, in the history of imaginary personages, who are made attractive to the young by the dress of some generous qualities. Such is the story called *Ten Thousand a Year*, which, while it presents us with much that is truly lovely and pious, treacherously employs the favor which it thus conciliates from us to make a false and malignant fling at the great and glorious Whig party of England. Such is the masterpiece of the Parisian novelist, Sue, constructed to recommend, in the fascinating person of a lovely young woman, painted with many heroic and magnanimous traits and invested with every element of interest, an embodiment of blasphemous infidelity and beastly epicurism and unchastity. Such are the little *Romans de Voltaire*, which seem to be trifles light as air, thrown off in the hours of relaxation, and sparkling with careless wit; but which are, in truth, every one a cunning and savage stab aimed at some vital truth. Indeed, we shall lose nothing by passing a general condemnation upon that whole school of modern French novels whose cheap translations, stitched in colored paper covers, circulate through all our railroad cars and book stalls, and even in the parlors of our people. They are, usually, foul with the concentrated moral filth that is collected and putrifies among the dregs of the great atheistical metropolis. They are rank with those poisonous errors in social concerns, politics, morals and religion, whose results are now seen in the agrarianism, the profligacy, the barricades, and the murderers of republican Paris. Every lady of decent fame should blush to have one seen upon her parlor table or to acknowledge that she had read one. Every head of a family should devote them to the flames, however fashionable, or however fascinating, however foplings, male or female, may simper that ignorance of their contents would exclude one from the "ton," as inexorably as he would the foul rags of a beggar who had died of the small pox on his premises.

But these books, whether intended to teach heresy and false philosophy or not, are generally guilty also of representing to the reader supposed scenes of crime and vice, thus subjecting his heart to a danger similar to that of associating with bad company. They are, in a word, obnoxious to all the objections of evil company in their strongest form. Does the youth hear oaths and blasphemies in the tavern bar-room? He hears them

in the scenes of the novelist. Does he become benefitted by witnessing brawls and duels? He witnesses them in the novel. Is his lust excited by beholding the arts and the gratifications of licentiousness in the house of ill-fame? He beholds them also in the novel. Now some have argued, that it is desirable to make the young familiar by their own observation with all the forms of vice, because in after life they must be exposed to their temptations. But such a policy shows a great ignorance of man's nature. Not so judged the Psalmist when he prayed, "Turn away mine eyes from *beholding* vanity." Not so judged the wisest of men when he urged, "Avoid it, pass not by it; turn from it, and pass away." Not so judged Paul, nor even the prudent heathen whom he quoted, when he taught that, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." All human beings, however amiable, have in their hearts, until sanctified, the dormant seeds of *all the vices*. Who does not know that the contemplation of such vices tends to awaken those seeds into life? It is just thus that evil companions and evil example tend to corrupt those who were previously innocent. It is dangerous to become familiar with wickedness, even by contemplating it in others.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mein
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

It were to be desired that the young should never know anything of vice by their own observation, except its retributions. How dangerous, then, the habitual reading of those works whose interest consists in the faults and vices of their imaginary personages?

And here I must pause to record my protest against a kind of reading which some persons seem to consider even less objectionable than works of fiction, because they profess to be true histories, the biographies of notorious villains. We have now lives of highway robbers, pirates, murderers, and swindlers, of Marrell and Monroe Edwards and Dick Turpin, and a multitude of such like rogues, giving a particular detail of all their villainies, where the only claim to public attention they offer is the peculiar baseness of their lives. It is much to be lamented that the love of novelty and exciting incident should so mislead

any as to make them capable of finding pleasure in dwelling upon these records of moral deformity, which should be repulsive to all right minds. Those who busy themselves in the production of these biographies may be justly regarded as assuming, in the moral world, a grade only analogous to that of the turkey buzzard, whose office it is to gain a disgusting livelihood by picking up the fragments of spiritual carrion which pollute the community, and gloating over their loathsome particulars with epicurean relish. To the same elevated class must be assigned those writers whose business it is to rake up the crimes of the prisons, the police courts, and the haunts of vice, for the columns of the newspapers. Indulgence in these kinds of reading is unworthy of a mind of the lowest grade of education. It tends to degrade and brutify the taste and feelings. And there is always danger that the wild daring and generosity imputed to the characters of outlaws will tempt the young to look favorably upon their crimes, and even to think of imitating them.

There are some reasons why the evil company of a bad book is even more corrupting and dangerous than that of a wicked living companion. One of these is, that the heroes and heroines, who are painted as defying the rules of good morals in some vital points, are still adorned with many imaginary qualities, such as courage, magnanimity, generosity, wit, and genius, which cause the young and impulsive reader to admire them in spite of their crimes. And from admiring the criminal it is but one step to excusing the vice, so that by this means the moral distinctions are worn out in the mind. Such a story as Bulwer's *Eugene Aram* should be entitled "Murder made Amiable." The usual tendency of these works is to familiarize the reader to viewing, without revulsion, nay, with actual admiration, the characters of duelists, drunkards, seducers, and other villains. And these fictitious villains are more dangerous companions than the bad men of real life, because this union of criminal traits with attractive and romantic qualities, which half atone for their faults in the view of the novel reader, is usually wholly imaginary. In actual life we find no such union, but wicked men appear coarse and repulsive. Vice soon robs their characters of that grace and delicacy which make the fictitious hero so dangerous an example.

These descriptions of moral delinquencies are, therefore, more

dangerous to the young than an actual mingling with living vice. In every real scene of wickedness there are usually features of coarseness, brutality, and loathsomeness, which disgust and repel the ingenuous mind. Vice appears in its real ugliness, and excites some of that hatred which it deserves. But in the fictitious painting all these coarser features are concealed, for they would mar the literary beauty of the work and outrage that pretence of decency which the world sees fit to wear. The scene is dressed in the gayest, the brightest, the most alluring garb which the genius of the author can throw around it. All can see how dangerous this false and partial portraiture must be to the unthinking. It represents the serpent with his graceful folds and his burnished scales of gold and purple, without his slime, his venom, and his fang. How natural that the inexperienced should be enticed to fondle it and be stung! And once more, the companionship of these descriptive scenes of vice is twice dangerous, because of the wit, the eloquence, and the genius by which the poison is commended to the taste. Actual vice is usually coarse and vulgar. Here its picture is gilded by all the skill of accomplished minds. Scenes of licentiousness are enstamped, *burned in*, upon the youthful imagination and memory by all the fire and force of the author's genius.

But there are also general reasons why a dangerous book, whether a descriptive and imaginary one or otherwise, is more insidious than any other evil companion. These books present themselves to us as seemingly quiet and passive things. They do not obtrude themselves on us, but stand as our helpless servants, coming only when we call them, and retiring the moment we bid them. They wear nothing of the aspect of assault or antagonism about them; and hence we are completely off our guard, and open to their influences. Again, they are usually read in the hour of retirement, when the mind is withdrawn into itself. Complete mental solitude, united with an absorption of the attention, especially by a work of fiction, produces an overwrought and morbid state of the sensibilities. Those wholesome, though unnoticed, restraints on the impulses of feeling, produced by the presence, the eye, the observation of a fellow-man, are absent. No human eye, no public opinion, no fear of ridicule, no sense of the shame of discovery, pierces the secret "chambers of imagery," where the soul is revelling in its intel-

lectual orgies and spiritual abominations. What wonder that the poison burns more deeply than when we are exposed to the corrupting society of living men checked by the restraints of publicity?

The results of such reading are neither vague, slight nor imaginary. They are as real and practical, as palpable and direct, as the common results of drunkenness. The writer of these remarks could point to a decided case of *lunacy*, neither remote nor obscure, which was notoriously produced by prolonged novel-reading. When a tragedy was enacted in one of our cities, which shocked the whole country with sudden murder and the final desolation of a home, the grey-headed father of the wretched woman whose delinquency had produced the catastrophe, stood up in a court of justice and testified on oath that the ruin was attributable to his daughter's indulgence in novel-reading. When the learned, pious, amiable and noble head of our University fell by the hand of an assassin, his death thrilling the community with horror and almost overturning the institution of which he was the pillar and ornament, the work of so many years of enlightened and patriotic exertion, the miscreant who shed his blood without cause boasted that his atheistical callousness to danger and to the value of human life was imbibed from the poisonous pages of Bulwer. And though catastrophes so shocking do not usually result from such reading, there are few or none who have indulged in it who have not suffered some injury in weakened principles, morbid feelings, and partial unfitness for the duties of actual life. Had a wise parental restraint been placed upon the youthful reading of the writer of these columns, it would have added no little to the equanimity, happiness and usefulness of his life. "*Haud ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.*"

I would, then, exhort all heads of families especially to be inexorable in cleansing their households of all such literary poison. We all know well that, however the young who are in the habit of indulging this dangerous taste may be convinced of its evils, there is little hope that *they* will be firm enough to wean themselves from it. And in this fact alone there is surely a sufficient argument of its danger, that its fascinations are so great, and its consequences so insidious, that even rational and ingenuous persons, though convinced of the mischief, cannot forego the indul-

gence. It devolves, therefore, on the heads and guides appointed for youth by God and by nature to protect them from the intoxicating evil, by the strong arm of parental authority. Parents should feel that their station both authorized and required them to remove such evils, as much as intoxicating liquors or opium. Fictions are the intoxicating stimulants of the immortal part. As parents love the souls of their children, they should snatch away the poison more rigidly than those nuisances which deprave and ruin the body.

I am well aware that men are usually more influenced to evil by one bad example than they are towards good by ten good arguments. It betokens little success to this essay to promote a good cause and to protect my readers against a common danger, that they have it in their power to answer me, as they have perhaps done ere this, that the usage of genteel society countenances what I am condemning, that novels are found on every parlor table, in Christian as well as irreligious houses, on the book-shelves of the daughters of ruling elders and clergymen, and in the hands even of doctors of divinity. I suppose it will avail nothing against such examples for me to answer, that if the universality of a custom proved its propriety, then there would be nothing so proper as *sin*, since there is nothing so universal, except perhaps breathing. In justice to those masters in Israel who look into such books, it should be stated that some of them do it only from a sense of duty, similar to that which induces the physician to analyze poisons, in order that he may warn others of their effects. Many of them, too, must account their indulgence in such reading as one of those lamentable infirmities to which good men are liable, an infirmity regretted by themselves, and by no means to be imitated by others. At most, the painful prevalence of the habit among those who profess to be on the side of virtue cannot prove that it is safe or right, but only that our Saviour's description of the visible church is still true: "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, and I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

There is one more reason against fictitious reading, simple, brief and absolutely conclusive. *All men* who read novels will confess that usually they read them *as an indulgence*, and not as a means of improvement. Now, it is an indulgence which *is not*

recreation, for it excites, wearies and emasculates the mind even more than excessive mental labor. But every man is responsible to God for the improvement of every hour which is not devoted to wholesome recreation. *Novel-reading is the murder of time*, and on this simple ground every mind which professes to be guided by religious principles is sternly challenged by God's authority to forego it. "Redeem the time." "The night cometh."

CO-OPERATION.¹

SOMETHING FOR VIRGINIANS TO READ.

OF the trite maxim that "union is strength," the Presbyterians of Virginia seem often to be ignorant. There is scarcely a public interest or institution belonging to them which has not suffered from the want of steady co-operation. Independence among us has become a vice, for it is often carried so far that one man will surrender no opinion, liking, or prejudice, in order to unite his strength with others in the support of an enterprise of admitted and fundamental importance. Is the matter in hand the founding or sustaining of a school, academy, college, religious paper, theological seminary? Is it urged, or even demonstrated, that its success will be most favorable to the cause of Presbyterianism? Is it correctly inferred, thence, that each individual ought to give it the support appropriate to his condition? All this is admitted in the general and in the abstract; but in the particular a sufficient number will usually be found preferring some similar project, so as effectually to mar its complete success. One says, "This school, college, seminary, periodical, whichever it may be, is not so perfect as some other similar ones abroad, therefore I shall not sustain it." Says another, "This teacher, or editor, is not the man of my choice; replace him with Mr. A. B., and I will sustain you heartily." But says a third, "If you do remove him, to make room for Mr. A. B., I promise you, you shall never have another iota of my support." Indeed, it often seems that you have but to make an enterprise a Virginia cause, and convince our people that it presents a special claim for their support, to create a motive to neglect it; our darling independence must be vindicated from the notion that we are bound to do anything regularly any longer than it pleases our sovereign selves.

The State pride also, of which Virginians are usually supposed

¹ An editorial article in *The Central Presbyterian* of October 31, 1857.

to possess a fair share, often exhibits itself in very strange fashion. Let any one from abroad disparage our things, we are bold enough in resenting it, and meanwhile we practically disparage them ourselves. The privilege of slighting or depreciating them is one which we jealously reserve for our own gratification. If any of our neighbors abroad pick up a Virginia idea, invention, or man, and make it great or famous, we are quick to claim and glory in our ownership; but if this invention or this man had remained on Virginia soil, we should have taken very effectual means to keep him or it from becoming great. Our intellectual estimates invert the rules of perspective: things at a distance loom largely in our admiration, and things close to us shrink to pigmy dimensions. Virginia is the hardest and most unjust of all stages upon which to sustain a reputation. The very fact that we possess a man, that he is ours, that he is close to us, is sufficient reason for our concluding that he is no great wonder after all. Hence, Virginians have ever been found supporters and patrons of enterprises whose prosperity was useless to them, and extravagant admirers of men and things afar off, just by reason of the fact that they knew little about them. What literary institution on foreign, or even hostile, soil has not been enriched with Virginia patronage, while our own have languished? How often has it been seen that Virginians have become famous in Virginia by going abroad, and have received from our people inordinate admiration and patronage, unjustly abstracted from home talents, to which these men would have held a subordinate place if they had stayed at home. The way to be honored *in* Virginia is to go *out* of it. The reward which we give to a faithful and self-sacrificing consecration to our service is depreciation. Desertion of the State is the thing which wins our applause.

Now, how unlike, how much wiser, is the policy which has been pursued by the Christians of New England, and of other sections of our country? You never found them depreciating or deserting their own institutions and interests, or "damning them with faint praise," by way of evincing their liberality and independence; you found no flocks of New England youth migrating to Southern or Western schools, and thus practically asserting the worthlessness of similar schools at home. And when New England men differed, as they naturally did, about the policy of their public institutions, they did not carry their dif-

ferences to the preposterous and suicidal length of killing, by neglect or opposition, their own enterprises, because they were not as prosperous as their sectional pride might desire. No, they sustained them *because they were their own*. They sustained them manfully though conscious that they might be at the time inferior, because common sense told them that this was the only way to make them superior. They sustained them while they admitted their defects, in order by vigorous support to make them perfect. They stood firmly by their own until others learned by their conduct to value them. People in all other sections of the Union naturally concluded that institutions so appreciated at home must be meritorious, and thus New England schools and presses were flooded with patronage from abroad. Does any one dream that this patronage would ever have been bestowed if those institutions had not been thus sustained by their own friends? Again, when these far-seeing, sensible people felt that any press was encumbered with an unsuitable editor, or any public school with an unsuitable teacher, they did not adopt the policy so fashionable in Virginia, they did not say, "As long as that man stays there the enterprise shall not have one iota of my support." They plainly saw that, on the supposition this incumbent was an unworthy man, he would be least affected by this withholding of their approbation, and would care nothing so long as his position and salary were secure. So that this line of policy on the part of the friends of the enterprise would be the feeblest, most indirect, and uncertain of all means to procure the removal of the unworthy incumbent, which should have been the object, while it would be the most direct and fatal means to destroy the enterprise. They saw that such policy would amount exactly to this, to stab the enterprise *which they loved* through and through the vitals, in order to render the obnoxious incumbent behind it uncomfortable, as they supposed he deserved to be made, by pricking his skin with the points of their swords. They did no such absurdity. If the unsuitableness of the incumbent was unbearable, they openly assaulted him, and not the enterprise, and honorably demanded his removal. If he was bearable, they sustained the institution firmly, not for his, but for Christ's sake, and covered the defect with a prudent silence, as a family secret which must be kept for their own honor and interest. Thus

their institutions and enterprises, instead of being kept starvings, so unlucky and depressed that none but unworthy, third-rate men would condescend to them, were nurtured into a strength sufficient to throw off defects by their vigorous growth, and to purge out unsuitable incumbents by becoming attractive to the most deserving.

Too long have Virginia Presbyterians indulged the opposite policy. Their Synod has lagged behind in numbers and influence; their vacant churches have increased; their enterprises have been choked by neglect; the very presses and other means intended to present our wants and urge the proper way to remedy them have remained unknown, while all the interest of many has been expended in reading and talking about the enterprises of other people, in which we had no direct concern. We would sadly and solemnly testify against this fatal policy. We would urge our brethren to a wiser co-operation. Unless we awake universally to our error, the sorrowful result will not be uncertain nor distant. Presbyterianism in Virginia will become a lame, scattering affair, a sort of provincial dependency on some more prosperous, because more rational, section of our church, and will drag its slow existence along, fed by such crumbs of refuse as the more favored sections find it convenient to spare from their own sustenance. In the first place, able and efficient men will not come among us from other sections. They will not leave places where their toilsome exertions can be efficient and appreciated to expose themselves to the mortifying torture of a depreciating jealousy following close on the heels of an extravagant admiration of neglected, stunted institutions, and of an uncertain, stingy and capricious patronage. We solemnly assure our brethren that this matter is already well understood by sensible men abroad. We have already acquired a character nearly fatal, and the opinion which prevails is, that the Virginia church is at the same time a field in which only the scantiest fruits can be reaped, and in which it is more difficult to sustain a reputation than in the more prosperous enterprises of other sections, where liberal results and a national reputation can be secured with half the toil. We tell our brethren that the prevalent idea abroad is, that Virginia institutions have become, in consequence of our peculiar temper, a sort of Sisyphus' stone, which are *fated to roll back*, even though propelled by giants.

And this opinion of us is clearly manifested in another form, the mention of which leads to our second remark. This melancholy state of affairs in Virginia is so well understood by our brethren abroad, that they perpetually act upon the supposition that every efficient man among us must of course be anxious to get away. How else can we account for the fact, that the ministry of Virginia, scantily as it is recruited, is the common *pouching ground* for churches, presses, and colleges, all around us which need supplies? Why else is it that every young man in the Virginia church who has shown capacity is chased with semi-annual, and almost monthly, "calls" to positions abroad? Our neighbors take it for granted that such men, sustained as they are at home, must naturally desire to emigrate. And there is, at this very day, scarcely a man of efficiency in the Virginia church, who has not had repeated opportunities to exchange his home position for one abroad, where he would be better paid and enjoy more generous co-operation. We owe their continuance among us only to their State patriotism, or to accident. The second consequence of our policy, then, must be to drive away our own men perpetually as fast as they become capable of usefulness. Alas, how widely has this result been already realized? What part of the church, north, west, south, is not now triumphing over us in a success and prosperity earned in part by the talents and reputation of Virginians, who would have been only too glad to labor thus for the Old Dominion if we had let them.

Yet there is a brighter side to this picture. Virginia Presbyterians are not all unwise and ungenerous towards their public servants. The history of *The Central Presbyterian*, while far from exhibiting that general co-operation which we believe *the cause* among us demands, yet presents cheering evidence that many of our brethren have another spirit. And the more hearty appreciation and general support now enjoyed among us by our beloved seminary in Prince Edward, is another instance which encourages us to hope that a better day is coming. There are members among the Virginia ministry and laity than whom no public servant ever had constituents more generous, magnanimous and affectionate. We, for our part, should be ungrateful if we failed to honor with the most glowing acknowledgments their liberal support. The thought of them is the bright spot,

next to the thought of our Master on high, which helps to cheer us amidst the mortifications and discouragements which all the occupants of public station among us experience from lack of co-operation. And if we may judge of other public servants by ourselves, the thought of these generous spirits is the thing which, next to a sense of duty, keeps them at their posts.

OUR POSITION¹

WE have elsewhere given an explicit, and, as we hope, satisfactory answer to the inquiries of an esteemed New School brother with regard to the meaning of a sentence in a former editorial about which he asks an explanation. We are aware that many of his brethren in the South agree with him when he says, "We believe your statement with regard to the condition of your own Assembly, and we greatly prefer a reunion with our brethren of the Old School to the formation of a new Assembly."

Moreover, correspondents and friends in our own connection have, by letter and by personal application, requested some expression of opinion with regard to the course proper to be pursued by our church towards our brethren of the New School in the South, should they desire a reunion with us. We regard this as a proper time to define our position, inasmuch as the opinions expressed in the letter above referred to open the way for a declaration of our views, without making us liable to the suspicion of intermeddling with other people's matters, or of desiring to bring over to our side any who would prefer another connection.

We shall endeavor to express ourselves so plainly that none can misunderstand or misrepresent us.

We address ourselves to candid men, who prefer truth to misrepresentation, and who earnestly desire to promote the true interests of Christ's kingdom. The circumstances which now surround us are such that we can give the freest utterance to our opinions with regard to the true policy to be pursued by ourselves and by our Southern New School brethren, without the imputation of officious obtrusion of advice or the spirit of unworthy proselytism.

It is conceded by all, and we refer to it in no boastful arrogance, but with humble gratitude to the great Head of the church, that

¹ This article appeared in *The Central Presbyterian*, July 11, 1857.

the Old School Presbyterian denomination in these United States is now strong, prosperous, and steadily progressive in its growth, power and usefulness. We need no accession from other ecclesiastical bodies to enable us to pursue our onward march to those successes and blessed victories to which we aspire under the guidance and beneath the banners of Christ our King. All we need is the blessing of God upon our present organization, and those accessions which come from the world, when he adds to the church of such as shall be saved. We regard a desire to absorb the members of any other Christian organization, merely for the purpose of increasing our numbers, as unworthy of such a church as ours; and, still more, we regard the admission of men who do not sympathize with us in doctrine and church government as the introduction of an element of weakness and disorganization earnestly to be deplored, and if possible positively to be interdicted.

We do, however, believe that among Southern New School Presbyterians there are thousands who are sound in doctrinal views and steadfast in attachment to the standards of our church, *one with us* in principle, sentiment, and all that constitutes true denominational fellowship and unity. And while we have no overtures to make, we will not permit the fear of being wilfully misrepresented prevent us from taking that dispassionate view of their present posture and proper course for the future which our independent position happily enables us to do.

Conscious of the purity of our motives, in this spirit of transparent candor and freedom, we have no hesitation in avowing our conviction that a reunion with us, on the proper basis, will *for them* be the wisest, safest, and happiest solution of the difficulty into which our New School brethren have been driven by the unrighteous action of their late Northern associates.

We therefore address our correspondent and those who, in his own words, agree with him in preferring a reunion with the Old School church to the formation of a new Assembly, and respectfully leave for their consideration some of the reasons which have brought us the conviction which we have just expressed as to the true policy of the New School Presbyterians in the South.

First, If you persist in forming a separate denomination, it will be limited to your Southern members. Your leaders tell you that they expect the adhesion of many conservative North-

ern brethren, so as to form a national church. June -will leave them sadly mistaken. If there was such a sympathy for you in the Northern mind, why did not some of it show itself on the test vote? You told them that to pass this vote was virtually to decide your excision. Did they spare? Did one single delegate from a free State fail to vote against you? That was the time to show it if they had any purpose of good will or friendship. And now, after an exhibition of hostility so universal, so deliberate, so excisive, how chimerical is it to expect extensive support at the North? We have watched the tone of Northern presses; while a *few* persons regret your excision, a still smaller number, probably *none*, will follow you into what they believe to be your exile. Now you say you don't wish to form a *sectional* denomination. You say, rightly, that it is injurious to the union and to feelings of national fraternity. If your leaders persist, they will inevitably find themselves in that unfortunate position. Should you conclude to join us, you will be, at least for the present, in a national church.

Second, Your denomination will be numerically small and scattered; and this is always a misfortune to any body. Small denominations are liable to be perpetually depleted by the passing over of their most active churches and ministers to that large denomination near them which is most kindred in doctrine. A thousand practical influences ensure this. Rising talents demand a wider field of enterprise. If you embark in this enterprise of a separate denomination, we do trust that no seductions will ever be employed with your ministers or churches by Old School Presbyterians; but you will assuredly lose frequently. You would be surprised to know how many men are now of our denomination, brought among us by the various influences described, who were *educated* and *ordained* among the various secession churches of the Presbyterian family; and they are usually just the men whose activity and talent confer strength. Again, it is impossible for a smaller denomination to hold the same doctrinal and ecclesiastical theories and yet continue a separate denomination, on the same ground with an older and larger one, without incurring mistrust. The public mind will ask: "If these men are also Presbyterians, why are they not one?" Both parties will be injured in public confidence; and, the younger especially, will have an *onus* to bear, which will be

a heavy incubus before the public. *You have already suffered severely from this*; do not persuade yourselves that this conscious *difficulty* of your position before a Southern public arose hitherto only from your connection with an abolition assembly. The public did not trouble itself about this. It knew that *you* were *sound* on this question; this was all it cared for. The difficulty was that the hard-headed, common-sense public *would* say to themselves: "If this younger party are also Presbyterians, as they avow, why are they not one with the older?" You will experience the same difficulty still.

Third, You have been almost exclusively dependent on the North hitherto for ministers. This supply must now cease. Without ministers your churches must soon die out. Your leaders tell you, "We will have our own college and seminary, and rear our own ministers." Ah! you will find this, as we know to our cost, no easy thing. You are not numerous; you are scattered. How much less desirable is a weak, struggling, poor institution, than one established and strong? Should you prefer to unite with us, you will share the advantages of ours, without money, and without cost. We have enough already established, enough for both, and they are already tolerably endowed. We have now, in Union, Columbia and Danville, seminaries; and in Washington, Hampden-Sidney, Davidson, Centre, Oglethorpe, Oakland and other colleges, apparatus enough to supply all our churches with ministers. Should you join us they will be equally beneficial to you. Again, in the separate position proposed, you can hope for no aid beyond your own borders in home missionary operations. The Home Missionary Society has already cut you off. Should the General Assembly (New School) establish a denominational agency for Home Missions, as it assuredly will do some day, their aid will, of course, be limited to their own ecclesiastical connection. There is nothing but the Southern Aid Society to help you; and this is limited and weak. How long will it be able to resist the same clamor under which the American Board Home Missionary Society, and even the American Tract Society, have succumbed? But associated with us, you would share all the resources of our numerous connection.

Have the body of the Southern Presbyterians known as

New School, who were born on Southern soil, *any feeling or interest* to keep them out of the Old School denomination? Have their ruling elders and laity any such feeling or interest? We believe not. Then—and we mean the question to be significant—for *whose* gratification; for whose behoof; for whose interest are all these burdens to be assumed, and this difficult, unnatural, disastrous position to be maintained? Who are the men to whose preferences, advantage, prejudices, or pride, all the rank and file, the laity and eldership, are to make these sacrifices?

Again, the active leaders of the separation in 1838, on the side known as New School, declared explicitly that Southern Presbyterians separated, not because the action of the Assembly in 1837 injured them one whit, “but out of sympathy with Northern brethren maltreated in that action.” Now, we will not urge the consideration, which might be discourteous at present, that *time* has verified most of the arguments which enforced and justified, in the hearts of Old School men, those measures of 1837. We only ask: Has not this duty of sympathizing testimony for Northern brethren been sufficiently performed? Have they not, with a vengeance, requited you in such a way as effectually to liberate you from further obligations of this nature? Will it not be advantageous to you to return to that place whence this generous sympathy, so foully misrequited, drew you at first? By returning, you do not endorse the policy, the rightfulness, not even the constitutionality, of those measures of 1837; nor do we ask you to do so. You will only place yourselves where many good and able men have stood all along, who thought with you, but remained with us. *They* said: “We believe these measures wrong, even unconstitutional; we testify against their wrong, but we leave the responsibility of them to the majority who enacted them, and whose will must prevail in all republican bodies. Their wrongfulness does not compel us to separate from this, which we believe to be the true church of Jesus Christ, though in this matter erring. We exercise our Christian liberty in testifying against her fault, but we go on as before, to labor for her good; for though in fault, it is Christ’s bride.”

This is so obvious, so just, that no attempt is made in the

document, or manifesto, proposing the course of the Southern session, to gainsay it. The *only* reason there assigned against such a reunion as is proposed is, that the Old School is also so tainted with abolitionism that it is not worth while to go there for peace on that subject. Now let us, brethren, look calmly and practically at this. Consider that the action of our Assembly against abolitionism was so satisfactory that *all* secular papers at the South endorsed it; and *all* Southern Presbyterians, Old School, were satisfied with it. Consider that this action was adopted by an overwhelming majority, embracing every vote except about thirteen. Consider that from that day to this, during the sessions of twelve Assemblies, not one instance of agitation has occurred in our meetings; and that in the last Assembly, amidst all the political storms elsewhere over the land, in our Assembly there was yet "*perfect peace*." Now, is not this enough? Your leaders say, we desire to form an organization, national, not sectional. But can any body, formed of slavery and anti-slavery men, promise more than our Assembly has realized? Your leaders say, the new body will be formed under a pledge against all slavery agitation. But we reply, when did ever a pledge bind the course of free discussion, or chain opinion? And what scriptural warrant have you for such a basis or term of church-fellowship? No; you will be as safe from abolitionism in our body as you can be in any national church. Should you join us with your one hundred and thirty-six ministers and thousands of communicants, our conservative strength, already immensely preponderant, will be farther increased. And if those funereal vaticinations in which a few for special purposes indulge, that we also must ultimately divide on this abolition point, should ever be fulfilled—which may God forbid—will not that be time enough for you to secede with us? Will not *one, grand*, mighty secession of Southern Presbyterians be better when that day of extremity and woe shall come, than two broken, divided ones, of which one was premature? But bear with our candor; when your leaders teach you to say, "the Old School church cannot be trusted on this subject," let us ask you to remember who are the men who affect this peculiar, excessive sensitiveness for Southern rights? Where were the most of them born and reared? Does it bear telling, that *they*

cannot be satisfied with a state of things in our denomination, on this point, with which all the ten thousands of your Southern Old School brethren, *born here, born slave-owners*, are fully content?

Should this union be formed, we have no humiliations to impose on our brethren commonly known as New School, no concessions to demand of them, but expect to meet them as equals. Should the inquiry be made, "What are the precise terms on which such a union would be agreed to by the Old School," we believe we express the general feeling of our denomination when we say, that we would receive any given church, session and minister, into any given Presbytery, in exactly the same way in which one Old School Presbytery would receive them from another Old School Presbytery. We would receive you precisely as we would receive each other. Can more be asked of us? Here is the Old School church A with an Old School pastor B, belonging to the Old School Presbytery C. They wish to be transferred to the Old School Presbytery D. How would we proceed? We would enroll the church A on the roll of the Presbytery D immediately on its giving us a simple assurance that its *church session*—not each of its individual members—held the doctrines and church order of our books, and the delegate of its session would, without further formality, be admitted to his seat in Presbytery. The Presbytery D would examine the pastor B on his views of personal piety, doctrine and church government, and if they were satisfied, would admit him also to a seat. We would do the same among the brethren known as New School. Is the examination of the minister seeking to pass from one Presbytery to another objected to? How can we be suspected of anything invidious when we do just the same with our own brethren? Should we do otherwise, it would be our own brethren who would have the right to call us invidious. But as to the admission of a church and its session, even this seeming difficulty does not exist. We do not speak by authority, but we doubt not that all church courts among the Old School will show themselves ready, as they have hitherto actually done, cheerfully to proceed as far for a cordial union as reason and fairness can demand. And we know that we can safely give to our brethren of the other connection these two as-

surances—the giving of which will perhaps do all which this article could do—that on the one hand we all feel a respectful friendship, a sympathy with the difficulties which injustice has imposed on them, and a sincere desire for any wholesome and hearty union of our interests; and on the other hand, that no approbation of a reunion is prompted by any self-interest on our part, or will ever be followed by any annoying solicitations.

MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.¹

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

IT is believed the Synod accepts the following statements as true :

1. The Presbyterian Church in Virginia has not realized that growth demanded for our wide destitutions, and of which the church of God should be capable. The apparent obstacle to an experiment of other means is that a proposal of amendment implies criticism, and this implication is likely to be resented. But since God has promised to be with his faithful ministers constantly to the end of the world, one of two things must be concluded, either that he is as much with us, and our labors are as successful as we are to desire or expect, or that we are not entirely faithful. Hence, if impatience of criticism is proper for us, we must believe that God's cause ought not to advance faster than it has done among us.

2. Recognizing our dependence for success on sovereign grace, and the supreme importance of more zeal and holiness in ministers and people, we account for our disappointment of fuller results partly by the fact that our whole ministerial force is not actively and continuously employed. The one hundred and eighty-four ministers and licentiates on our roll probably do not perform the work of ninety-two men continuously employed. And this disastrous loss of efficiency proceeds greatly from deficient support. Where half a minister's days is consumed by worldly toils, the loss of true efficiency is even greater, because a heart harassed and untuned by secular anxieties and habits of feeling is less energetically given in the remaining fragments of time to the care of souls.

3. But if the inability or injustice of churches lays this necessity on pastors, they are by no means to be blamed for making an honest secular calling supply their wants, after the example

¹ This paper was presented to the Synod of Virginia, in 1867, as an argument in connection with a report from a committee appointed on that subject in 1866.

of Paul, the tent-maker. We rather rejoice that, by means of this self-denial of ministers, the destitutions are supplied with partial ministrations which otherwise would be wholly neglected, while yet we deplore the obstructing of so much spiritual effort which might otherwise be enjoyed by the church.

4. To realize the full effect of the pastor's work he must be "free from worldly cares and avocations," to devote his whole time, not only to Sabbath preaching, but to catechizing, preaching the gospel from house to house, and a perpetual and manifold oversight of souls. And one great lesson to be taught our laity is their urgent need of all this spiritual labor, and the wisdom of purchasing and exacting it. Whereas their sense of want is often no more than of the Sabbath sermon and the occasional call, which are dispatched in a fragment of the minister's time; whence the not unnatural feeling that a partial compensation therefor is all that justice requires.

5. Our merciful Divine Head still shows us, amidst all our delinquencies, that a true pastoral work is still always rewarded by the sure growth of the charge which enjoys it. This fact summons us, by the most solemn and pleasing obligation, to make experiment of such full and faithful work in all our field.

6. It is a truth equally clear and important, that Presbyteries cannot exact of their members this full work while these are necessarily engaged in earning otherwise a part of their maintenance. Whence *adequate sustentation is an absolute prerequisite for proper Presbyterian government over pastors.*

7. It is not unnatural that both Christian parents and their sons should have a feeble sense of the claims of the ministry, while the church fails to employ fully the clerical force she already possesses. Hence we shall draw more laborers into Christ's harvest by giving more efficiency to those now in the field.

From all which it appears plain that the two *desiderata* of our church in this department are :

- (1.) *Adequate and sure maintenance for her laborers.*
- (2.) *Their entire consecration to the ministerial work.* Can these be secured?

Supposing the first secured, it appears to us that we must depend for the second on the removal of all pretexts and obstacles against concentration of heart and labor, on the demands of a

mere enlightened Christian opinion in the church; on the more firm oversight of Presbyteries over their own members; and chiefly on the Christian conscience and fidelity of ministers themselves.

But touching the first, adequate maintenance, it seems to us that experience, if it can prove anything, has proved that this result cannot come from our present practice; for the sad fact is that most of our pastors are, and always have been, in trouble about this matter; and that the provisions actually made for them are, in most cases, notoriously neither adequate nor trustworthy, and this, after the most strenuous appeals and injunctions in every form, from Assemblies, Synods, Presbyteries and pastors. The records of our own Synod especially will show that this evil has been for years a special subject of legislation, and yet it is not abated, but rather increased.

CAUSES OF OUR DIFFICULTY.

The true causes of this standing difficulty appear to be, first and *radically*, the natural unbelief, carnality, and deadness of man's heart towards spiritual things. We see men generally neglectful or forgetful of the pecuniary value of instruction in the things of God, precisely because they are indifferent to those things themselves. And as long as men are born sinners this difficulty of support will assuredly continue. The secondary causes are neglect of official functions by elders and deacons, the partial secularization of pastors from this very difficulty, and consequent neglect of pastoral functions by them, so that this plague of our Zion potently operates to propagate its own mischiefs; and probably still more than either of these, the feeling of the laity, that, as they are not enjoying and do not really need the whole time and energy of their preachers, so they are not justly held to pay for more than a fragment.

THE REMEDY.

From this view of the causes, it is perfectly evident that there is a *vis inertiae*, permanent and general, in unsanctified, and partially sanctified, human nature, by which we must expect ministerial support to be partially obstructed as long as it is left to the separate *momentums* of the very bodies in which this *inertia* inheres. Whence it appears obvious that this function,

like that disciplinary one of "general review and control," is precisely one of those which requires the invigorating force and will of the ruling power of the united church; because that general ruling power is supposed to represent the highest wisdom, zeal, and spirituality of the whole. I confess that I cannot evade the conviction, that our practice of leaving the question of each minister's support to his own charge and himself, is not, and never was, either sensible or practicable; that from its nature it has been, and must be hereafter, inadequate to the end, and ought to be definitely abandoned.

We also believe that it is inconsistent with the true spirit of our time-honored constitution. This gives the Presbytery discretionary control over the compact between the pastor and his people; so that while, on the one hand, no pastor can be intruded on a people without their free choice, and no minister can be forced to any field against his will, neither can a pastoral compact take place without the approval of the Presbytery, and this court remains the umpire and guardian of both parties to the bond. But our usage practically leaves the pastor and his proposed charge to settle terms as they choose, or can. Our system scripturally teaches that God gives ministers to his church as a whole, and that the grand duty of which they are public organs, that of evangelizing the world, is enjoined on the whole church. But our usage treats the pastor as though God had given him to his particular charge alone, and thus it alone were responsible for his support. The Scriptures teach both the spiritual and organic unity of the church, by which all the parts sympathize together, and they command (2 Cor. viii. 13, 14), not "that other men be eased and we burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time our abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for our want; that there may be equality." They command us (Phil. ii. 4), "to look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." They say (Gal. vi. 2), "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." But our usage practically leaves each congregation to bear its own burdens, notwithstanding a great, and sometimes an enormous difference of ability. By our disjointed method of sustaining this prime agency of the church's work we entail feebleness and failure on many of our essays, which are nearly wastes

of money and labor, because not directed by the best wisdom of the church, or not steadily sustained by her united means after a beginning is made. The Presbyterian Church has much to learn here from that great enemy of Christ's truth, the Papacy. This thoroughly knit system appears always to have its men at the right point, and money to sustain them there; because all act in concert, and each priest knows that he depends on the united treasury of the church. So, to do its work successfully, our church must realize in action the scriptural theory of its unity of spirit and government.

PRESBYTERIAN PRINCIPLES MUST BE CARRIED OUT.

To what then shall we look for *momentum* to overcome the partial indifference and *inertia* of individual congregations? Religious establishments by the State and a general religious assessment have been repudiated by the common judgment of our church and community. The law of God expressly leaves Christians free to use their own judgment in the amount of their contributions, saying (2 Cor. ix. 7), "Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity." There remains, therefore, no other authority save that of the church, and this extends only to enlightening, instructing and persuading the people, by the love of the "Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor;" and to the wise direction and administration of the contributions of the faithful.

But our system can never exhibit its full vigor until our church courts become Presbyterian in fact as well as in name. The different courts must actually govern the church, and be the efficient *media* of the power delegated to her by her Divine Head. Ministers and congregations must be governed, as well as individual laymen. For instance, Presbyteries must prevent those arrangements which often virtually sequester and neutralize ministers, where domestic convenience, or some such motive, leads them to settle over feeble churches, which in fact are not able and do not expect to pay for and employ their whole time. The church as a united whole should possess and direct the labor of the whole ministry, as her appointed organ for her grand task; and so the strength of the whole must be concerted for their support.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

The attempt to organize more efficiently the service of the church is not seldom met by doubts of this general kind. We are reminded that the true life of the church is the life of spiritual religion in the hearts of its ministers and people. It is suggested that the desire for more compact organizations is often the result of the decline of this true life, and is a species of attempt, necessarily vain, to substitute for the life of true religion a sort of "*machine religion*;" that nearly all the corruptions of the church in past times have arisen thus, in the well-meaning but ill-judged essays of good men to heal evils of the church which nothing but true revival can remedy; that human foresight, when it goes thus rashly to legislating, can never foresee the ulterior results in which its expedients will eventuate. And just thus, it is said, popery with all its spiritual tyranny, grew up by the human expedients of good men.

Moderator, there is a sense in which these remarks are true—valuable, statesmanlike truths. Especially would I admit that it is beyond the reach of man's foresight to surmise the ulterior workings of human institutions. Nothing but the light of experience, or else the teachings of omniscience, can guide us safely here. Therefore our wisdom will be to attempt to invent nothing, and to apply to the maladies of the church no other expedients but the plans given to us by the precepts and precedents of the Bible. For then, and only then, we shall be safe; because then we have the safe guidance of omniscience. But I also urge that, while the true life and strength of the church are spiritual, our Lord has manifestly decided that certain instrumentalities are necessary to foster this life. He has ordained the employment of such. He has resolved to work usually through them. Among them are, according to our Confession, "the reading, and especially the preaching, of the Word." There is, then, a true sense in which it is our duty to employ "machinery," and to expect success proportioned to its completeness; that is, God's own machinery. And now my desire to apply this more closely-adjusted system is grounded wholly upon the belief that it is God's expedient, God's machinery; or, in other words, that it is but a more correct and full application of the church government laid down for us in the New Testa-

ment. This I have endeavored to show. If I am wrong, let it not be adopted ; but if I am right in this, we need not fear that it will result either in the substitution of a "machine religion" for life in the heart, or that it will eventuate in an unforeseen perversion of our spiritual liberties, for we are following an all-seeing guide.

PASTORAL LETTER ON MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.¹

DEAR BRETHREN: Convinced by many painful facts that the interests of Christ among us are suffering much loss by the inadequate compensation of ministers, we judge it our duty to address to you a word of pastoral instruction and exhortation concerning it. We thankfully recognize the improvement which has been made, and is now making, in this matter, and we commend the exertions of Synods, Presbyteries, and churches, to remedy evils previously existing, bidding them God-speed in their laudable endeavors. Many churches, especially in our densely peopled districts, seem to give as full pecuniary support to their ministers as is needful. But much yet remains to be amended. It appears that the average of the salaries paid to the ministers of our denomination is only about \$460; and as some receive large sums, there must consequently be a large number whose income sinks far below this moderate sum. Many cases of cruel suffering and destitution exist in the families of men who are faithfully endeavoring to serve God and his church; and the usefulness of our ministers is grievously crippled in a multitude of cases by pecuniary distress.

WHAT IS AN ADEQUATE SUPPORT.

The question, What is an adequate pecuniary support? cannot be answered absolutely, and without regard to surrounding circumstances. The cost of living, the style prevalent in the community in which the minister labors, and many other things must be considered; for what would be sufficient to one in one place, might be entirely inadequate to another in another position. And a salary which was formerly liberal may have now become insufficient, because of the great and general change which has occurred in the value of money, as related to all the means of

¹ Adopted and issued by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States to the churches under its care.

subsistence. On this point it should be especially considered that money is not an absolute article of value, but only a representative of value, and that a fluctuating one. The adequacy of the compensation made is not to be measured by the absolute amount of money paid, but by the quantity of the means of subsistence which that money will buy. The late rise of prices has had just the effect on the interests of ministers of an actual reduction of salary, where their stipends have not been correspondingly increased. Consider, we pray you, whether it will not be an abuse and dishonor of God's bounty if his recent liberal blessing on your industry is thus accompanied by an increased stinting of the servants who labor in his sanctuary.

We neither demand nor wish that the means of luxury or of avaricious accumulation shall be bestowed on our ministers. It is our desire that they shall ever be models to their charges of sobriety and Christian moderation. And may the Great Head of the church ever forbid that this service should possess such worldly attractions as to entice into it ungodly or selfish men, actuated by the love of lucre. What we demand as the just right of the minister is a *decent competence*, which will place him on a level in this regard with the respectable classes of his charge, and which will enable him to train his children for stations of usefulness and respectability in Christian society, and to leave his widow above the fear of pauperism.

WHY INSUFFICIENT SALARIES ARE GIVEN.

We are persuaded that much of the deficiency in ministers' support proceeds not from designed injustice, but from misconception. In agricultural communities, where the most frequent instances of hardship occur, there is much error as to the amount necessary for the maintenance of a family. The farmer observes the stipend of the minister, and finding it equal or superior to the sum for which he himself sells all those productions of his farm which are sent to market, he concludes that the pastor is liberally paid. He forgets that the larger part of the maintenance of his own family is derived directly from the soil without being converted into money. If he, like the minister, were compelled to pay in money for all those thousand products and comforts which the bounty of his farm confers, he would find that an adequate support would consume far more than passes

annually through his own or his minister's hand in the form of money.

Many of our smaller congregations also are content to pay their ministers insufficient salaries, because practically they do not feel that they are paying for all their time. The people misconceive their own spiritual wants, and the nature of that toil which should be expended in their supply. They suppose that if the minister spends a day or two of the week in hurried preparation of one or two sermons, and the Sabbath in their delivery, this, with an occasional attendance at scenes of affliction, is all that need be done. The rest of the week he may devote to his own interests. If he engages in teaching a school or cultivating a farm for his own support they do not feel themselves wronged, for they do not consider his whole time as purchased by them. They regard his sacred functions as additional to his secular, and consider themselves consequently as only bound to provide for a part of his support, instead of regarding his ministry as all in all, as he and they should think it. In this case the deficient support is rather a mistake than an injustice. But we exhort the congregations under our care to dismiss this erroneous and mischievous conception, and to seek the whole of the minister's energies and labors, by rendering for them a just recompense. The increased prosperity of the congregations and usefulness of the pastors will soon convince all that it is wise to secure the undivided labors of the ministry by a fair and full compensation. And when such compensation is rendered we shall not complain of, but rather applaud you, if the ministers under our care are strictly required to give their whole time and efforts to your service.

TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

To commend this subject further to your consciences, we argue, first, the explicit testimony of the Holy Scriptures to the minister's right to a just maintenance. We enter our solemn rebuke against the unscriptural idea that what is given for ministerial labors is a charity, which may be bestowed or withheld as generosity dictates, instead of the payment of a just debt. There is probably little need among us to rebuke the ignorant notion that mental and professional services are not true labor, and so are not fairly entitled to a pecuniary equivalent. The

whole sense of mankind and course of society refute it. That mental labor is, of all kinds, the most arduous, is sufficiently proved by the fact that, notwithstanding its greater emoluments, so few are found who can endure it and succeed in it, compared with the numbers who pursue manual occupations. We also testify earnestly against the assertion that it is unworthy of the disinterestedness of the Christian minister to receive pay for preaching the gospel. The true minister does not preach *for gain*; but he is not a disembodied spirit; he must live, or he cannot preach. Sufficient to refute all such views is the word of God. "The laborer is worthy of his hire." Under the Old Testament and the New alike, God has explicitly ordained that the ministers of religion shall receive support from those for whom they minister. "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.) This positive command of God should be enough for all his servants. And what labor can be so worthy of liberal recompense as that of the minister, to the successful performance of which the longest training and the rarest combination of bodily, mental and moral excellences, with temper, experience and social tact are requisite, which concerns the dearest interests of man, both for this life and that which is to come, and which is performed by the faithful workman, under the influence of the most sacred sympathies and affections, and the most solemn responsibilities? "If they have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if they shall reap your carnal things?" (1 Cor. ix. 11.)

HINDRANCE TO MINISTERIAL EFFICIENCY.

Second, We urge upon you the loss of ministerial efficiency which the church suffers through the neglect of this duty. The great cry of our Zion is for an increase of ministers; and annually we pray the "Lord of the harvest," in solemn concert, to "send forth laborers into his harvest." If all the men in our church capable of usefulness were wholly released from the hindrances which proceed, directly or indirectly, from inadequate support, the efficiency of our ministry would be vastly increased. And this would be equivalent to a proportionable

increase of their numbers, with this additional advantage, that the church would enjoy this increased service without the long delay and large expense of training new men. Most of our churches are able to give fair compensation to their pastors if they fully understand the duty and put forth their strength. And if the strong would give that help to the weak which Christian charity and unity dictate, the lack of our small churches would be abundantly supplied from the superfluity of the rich.

We are able to remedy this whole evil at once if we will. What, dear brethren, is the guilt of causing this vast waste of Christian efficiency in such a day of need, and this wide-spread loss of souls by the voluntary neglect of a duty which the bounty of providence has placed easily within our reach? How can we pray to the Searcher of hearts to prosper his cause in our hands while this neglect is unreformed?

Suffer us to point out the modes in which the usefulness of ministers is herein wasted, in order that you may apprehend your own loss in it, as well as that of Christ's cause at large. It is too obvious to need remark, that when the minister is driven to secular labor for a part of his support, so much of his time is lost to the direct service of his Master. But this is not all. His energies and thoughts are divided, and the remainder of his time is less efficiently employed in his ministry. Too often secular labor, reluctantly begun under a stern necessity, forced upon him by the injustice of his people, results in the loss of studious habits, the chilling of pastoral zeal and the secularizing of the spirit. Does providence bless those secular labors with success? Do the minister's intelligence and energy make him a prosperous teacher or farmer? That success becomes often a snare, and he grows less and less a pastor and more a man of business. Thus, too, often the finest energies have been almost lost to the church, contrary to the early intentions and wishes of the minister himself. It has been remarked with much truth, that the pastors of our church are usually found richest in those districts where the salaries are most insufficient. You have an explanation above.

The stinted means of the minister limit his usefulness in many other ways. He is unable to make those additions to his little library which are demanded for the improvement of his own mind and the interests of his charge. The pinchings of poverty

close against him a hundred smaller channels of usefulness. But far worse, the gnawing cares of a future for which there is no provision consume his spirits, preoccupy his thoughts in the hours of study, and cast a thick shade between his anxious eyes and the page from which he should draw instruction for his people. The mind cannot work when it is bowed down by the load of the heart. Nor is it an answer to this to say, that the sufferer ought to have faith enough cheerfully to cast his worn and wearied wife and his destitute children upon the arm of him who feedeth the young ravens when they cry. It is, indeed, the privilege and duty of all God's people when wronged to cast their burden on the Lord, and it is his glory to sustain them, repairing with the joys of his salvation the sufferings which man has caused. But does not the very compassion with which he heals their sorrows imply in his righteous nature equal indignation against the wrong which has inflicted them? Woe unto that man who thus unfeelingly and profanely invokes the divine goodness to repair the injustice which he himself wilfully permits.

Sometimes the pecuniary distress of the minister arises from a cause against which we feel bound to raise our especial and solemn testimony: long continued arrears upon the salary promised in his call. Then, unless he has a peculiar measure of faith and patience, there is added to his other perplexities the painful sense of injury. This cause of irritation, concurring with every other which arises in his intercourse with his charge, works alienation and bitterness of feeling, and prepares the way for disruption and removal. The warm sympathies of the pastor's heart cannot very easily go out towards those from whose thoughtlessness or injustice he is suffering cruel embarrassments and breach of covenant.

In a word, in pleading for the removal of these evils, we do not plead for ministers' personal interest only; we urge your own injury to the cause of Christ.

Third, It is not improper to remind you that your conduct in this matter will vitally affect the cause of your Master throughout the rest of Christendom. Ours is the only country where Christianity has been wholly divorced from the state, and its institutions left to the voluntary support of its followers. It is questioned whether this support can be trusted; and all the

world now looks upon the American churches with interested gaze, to see whether the warm hearts and the free gifts of those who love Christ are the best and the sufficient resource of his cause, as the friends of religious liberty have asserted; or whether the arm of the ruler and tax-gatherer must still be invoked to wring a reluctant support for it from the citizens. If we, brethren, leave so many godly and laborious men in that destitution, which is now the *opprobrium* of the American churches, the verdict of Christendom will be against the cause of freedom, and many generations may not be able to reverse it.

EFFECTS OF INCREASED SECULAR PROSPERITY.

In conclusion, permit us to remind you again of that unexampled secular prosperity in our land, which, while it has increased your gains, has increased the difficulties of your servants in the church, by raising the prices of the means of subsistence. In that prosperity the people of God have fully shared. Bear in mind that while it places in your reach enlarged means of doing good, it also constitutes a new and most treacherous temptation. Sanctify your abundance by a just and generous distribution to the cause and servants of the Giver, and the enjoyment of the remainder will be both sweeter and safer. "If the first fruits be holy, the lump will also be holy." But if you signalize this season of the divine bounty by leaving your brethren who serve you in sacred things under growing privations; if you only enlarge your plans of self-indulgence or greedy accumulation, a righteous God will suffer your abundance to become your bane. "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Peter i. 18, 19.) Seeing that God is graciously pleased to make your silver and gold means to promote his cause, and seeing that they are at the same time so unspeakably cheap compared with the priceless souls for which Christ died, let your enlightened and righteous resolve be, to give nothing, indeed, for the pampering of luxury or pride, or to foster the desire of gain, and to withhold nothing by which the highest efficiency, the most cheerful and healthy exertions of every minister who truly has a mind to the work, may be secured to his Master's cause.

Believing that the inadequate support of ministers arises more

from the neglect of a proper system, and the fact that no one is properly charged with the duty of its collection, than from intentional injustice or unwillingness on the part of the people, we must say to the officers of those churches where the evil exists that the fault is chiefly theirs. And we urgently recommend that the sessions and deaconships make a systematic provision for the pastors' salaries, by a permanent annual subscription or pew rent from the people, which should always be somewhat larger than the sum covenanted in the "call," and that they provide efficient persons for its punctual collection.

ECCLESIASTICAL EQUALITY OF NEGROES;¹

THE Synod first hurriedly adopted, without inquiry, the following preamble and resolution, and then reconsidered it; viz.:

"Whereas the paper upon the subject of the colored people, adopted by the last General Assembly, has been erroneously construed by some as teaching the doctrine that colored men possessing the qualifications required by the standards of our church and the word of God should not be ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, simply because they belong to the negro race; therefore,

"Resolved, That the General Assembly be overtured to declare that the church is Christ's universal kingdom; that its doors are open alike to all those who love the Lord Jesus, and that ordination to the work of the gospel ministry is to be given to all those called of God to, and qualified for the work, without respect of persons."

The motion to reconsider having brought up the above on its merits, Rev. R. L. Dabney, who was entitled to the floor, waived his right to speak in favor of a member making a motion for indefinite postponement without debate. This motion was ruled to be debatable, and on it discussion was continued an hour; when it was negatived. Rev. Mr. Dabney, regaining the floor, spoke as follows:

Then, Mr. Moderator, it seems this unhappy and mischievous subject must be thrust upon our attention, whether we wish it or not. I therefore beg you to note that its agitation is not of

¹ A speech delivered in the Synod of Virginia, Nov. 9, 1867. The above is substantially what was spoken in the Synod. But it was delivered without much premeditation or method, and under great haste from the fear of prolixity. Hence some things were probably said which are here omitted, and some things intended were omitted in the speaking. A few sentences have been introduced here and there, in the way of expansion and illustration of points actually made in the Synod, which were not spoken there. Published in pamphlet form, 1868.

my making. When entitled to the floor, I cheerfully yielded it for a motion of indefinite postponement without a word upon the merits of the question, although the debate had been exclusively by the members of the other side ; and the last thing which the Synod had heard was an earnest and long speech, most forcibly delivered, in advocacy of views which my whole judgment opposed. But the house will have discussion ; I therefore beg leave to say a few things, as briefly as I may.

I oppose sending this overture to the General Assembly, because the whole subject is unseasonable. The country, the black people, our own minds, all agitated by unusual passions, are in no state to settle this question wisely or well. It is believed there is not a member on this floor who does not think, with me, that it would have been better had the Memphis Assembly let this matter alone, although their decision was right in principle. Why then double the evil of untimely action, and again disturb the subject, possibly to settle it wrong ? I have had enough of declarations and manifestations of special interest in, and love for, the souls of "the freedmen" under existing circumstances. When I see them almost universally banded to make themselves the eager tools of the remorseless enemies of my country, to assail my vital rights, and to threaten the very existence of civil society and the church at once, I must beg leave to think the time rather *mal apropos* for demanding of me an expression of particular affection. If I gave it, I should not expect any one to credit it. Were you traveling in Mexico, assailed by bandits, wounded, dragged from your carriage, bound to a tree, and looking with a bleeding pate upon the rifling of your baggage, if you were called on to state, then and there, how exceedingly you desired the spiritual good of the yellow-skinned barbarians who were persecuting you, it is to be presumed that you would beg to be excused, under the circumstances. So I, for one, make no professions of special love for those who are, even now, attempting against me and mine the most loathsome outrages. If I can only practice the duty of *forbearance* successfully, and say, "Father, forgive them : they know not what they do," I shall thank God for his assistance in the hour of cruel provocation.

I oppose this overture, second, because it is both incorrect and ambiguous. It begins, "Whereas the Memphis Assembly

has been erroneously construed," etc. Mr. Moderator, the malignant slanderers of that Assembly do not misunderstand it. They know well enough what the Assembly meant. Their accusations are prompted by no zeal for truth or good, but solely by a spiteful pleasure in goading us by the obtrusion of a distasteful and difficult subject. Tell me not that there is any true regard for the negro's good in these people when I have before me the proof of their cruel indifference to both the bodies and souls of their own free blacks, and their recent perpetration upon the Southern negroes of the most enormous crime of the century at the bidding of factious zeal. I, for one, will not so degrade myself as to truckle to this spiteful hypocrisy, by explanations and uncandid retractions. The meaning of the Memphis Assembly is plain; and it is in the main correct. They say that while the blessings of redemption are free to all, of every race or caste, the privileges of church office may be properly withheld from some, at the dictate of a sound discretion. This is scriptural truth. The Memphis Assembly was right in principle, although wrong in details, and is not misunderstood.

This overture demands that the Assembly shall declare that "ordination shall be given to all those called of God to, and qualified for the work, without respect of persons." Now, sir, there is a sense in which every one in this house will assent to this as a general proposition. But in which meaning is it to be taken? Does it imply that we may properly decide that the evidence of God's *call* and *qualification* is fatally defective, where an insuperable difference of race, made by God and not by man, and of character and social condition, makes it plainly impossible for a black man to teach and rule white Christians to edification? If so, I adopt it. Or does it mean that it is right to ordain a black man—if we have any such—possessed of the piety, integrity and learning required by our standards, to preach to black Presbyterian congregations, if we have any? Then I adopt it. Or, does it ask the General Assembly to enact, that I shall help to ordain a negro to teach and rule white people, and make him a co-equal member with myself in West Hanover Presbytery, to sit in judgment on the affairs of white churches and members? Is this its end? I see one and another boldly and defiantly nod their assent. On this point gentlemen, I am utterly opposed to you; and I can only account

for hearing a proposal so astounding from such gentlemen as I know you to be, by these two motives: an overstrained and quixotic magnanimity, and the stress of a supposed necessity of logical consistency, under which you have fallen by means of a sophism. As the friends of this measure avow that this is its real extent, I shall direct my remarks to this point chiefly.

And third: I oppose the agitation of this whole subject, because it is unpractical. The only appreciable effect it can have will be to agitate, and so to injure our existing churches. On the basis you profess—that is, to exact impartially, of the black man as of the white, full compliance with the requirements of our standards—the negro is not coming to you. He will none of you. He wholly prefers the Yankee to you. So that this whole zealous discussion presents us in the ridiculous light of two school boys, who after a stiff fight over a bird's nest, ascertain that it is too high or too low for either of them to reach. Perhaps this is the very thought which prompts some to support this scheme; that they may disarm abolitionist criticism by seeming to obey their imperious dictation, and to open the door of our ministry to negroes, while they rely on the negroes' hostility to protect us from their entrance, a result which they would no more accept than I do. Thus they hope to "save their manners and their meat" at once. Is this candid? Is it manly? Is it Christian honor?

But I warn these gentlemen that they will be deceived by the results. While I greatly doubt whether a single Presbyterian negro will ever be found to come fully up to that high standard of learning, manners, sanctity, prudence, and moral weight and acceptability which our constitution requires, and which this overture *professes* to honor so impartially, I clearly foresee that, no sooner will it be passed than it will be made the pretext for a partial and odious lowering of our standard in favor of negroes. Do not facts prove it? Were not the only black ministers ordained by our church since the war, all three, ordained in flagrant violation of the constitution? There has broken out among many a sort of morbid craving to ordain negroes—to get their hands on their heads. Indeed, it seems to be a fatality attending that moral and mental *malaria* which infects the age, that when people become interested about this unfortunate race they must take leave of their own good sense, and grow extrav-

agant, hasty, and inconsiderate. No clearer proof need be asked of the presence of this disease here than the case which is made the pretext of this overture. The mover of it, and others, have already told you that the discussion is not unpractical, because Rappahannock Presbytery has now an actual case pressing, urgently pressing, for immediate decision, for which those brethren need the guidance of the Assembly to-day; that there is a black licentiate of many years' standing, of excellent gifts of character, who should have been ordained already, and whose application for orders is pending. Now, Mr. Moderator, will you not be surprised to hear this statement, which I derive from the most unquestionable source, that this colored man, although an excellent man, was undoubtedly licensed without the constitutional qualifications; that he certainly has not yet acquired them; that he is not an applicant for ordination at all, but is perfectly satisfied with his position; that there is no colored Presbyterian church to call him as pastor, and that there is not even a Presbyterian mission field for him, but he is laboring among the colored Methodists. If this statement is disputed, the authority is ready. But I advise the contestant not to demand it, unless he desires to be put to confusion. There is manifestly an unhealthy restlessness about the ordination of black men. Let this overture pass the Assembly, and you will soon see it made the occasion for violating our standards at the prompting of quixotic and romantic generosity towards this unfortunate race, and for introducing some into our ministry as much unfitted for it by attainments and character as by color. My point, then, is this, that if the action proposed is wholly unpractical, it is neither candid nor dignified. But if it is destined to have any practical effect, its operation will be only mischievous just to the extent it is operative.

Fourth, I oppose the entrusting of the destinies of our church in any degree whatever to black rulers, because that race is not trustworthy for such position. There may be *a few exceptions*—I do not believe I have ever seen one, though I have known negroes whom I both respected and loved in their proper position—but I ask emphatically, Do legislatures frame general laws to meet the rare exceptions? or do they adjust them to the general average? Now, who that knows the negro does not know that his is a subservient race; that he is made to follow, and not

to lead ; that his temperament, idiosyncrasy and social relation make him untrustworthy as a depository of power? Especially will we weigh this fact now, unless we are madmen ; now, when the whole management to which he is subjected is so exciting, so unhealthy, so intoxicating to him, and when the whole drift of the social, political and religious influences which now sway him bear him with an irresistible tide towards a religious faction which is the deadly and determined enemy of every principle we hold dear. Sir, the wisest masters in Israel, a John Newton, an Alexander, a Whitefield, have told us that although grace may save a man's soul, it does not destroy his natural idiosyncrasy this side of heaven. If you trust any portion of power over your church to black hands, you will rue it. Have they not done enough recently to teach us how thoroughly they are untrustworthy? They have, in a body, deserted their true friends and natural allies and native land, to follow the beck of the most unmasked and unprincipled set of demagogues on earth, to the most atrocious ends. They have just in a body deserted the churches of their fathers. They have usually been prompt to do these things just in proportion to their religious culture and to our trust in them. Is not this enough to teach us that, if we commit our power to that race, in these times of conflict and stern testimony, possibly of suffering for God's truth, it will prove the "bruised reed which, when we lean upon it, will break and rend all our side, and cause all our loins to be at a stand?"

Last : I deprecate this action, because, so far as it is to have any success, it is to bring a mischievous element into our church at the expense of driving a multitude of valuable members and ministers out. Sir, it is paying too dear for the indulgence of religious romance, or the propitiating of meddlesome abolitionists, to rend our Southern Church and drive from us its noblest part. I solemnly caution members of this Synod of the intense, the indignant, the irreconcilable opposition which their measures excite among the great body of our eldership and people. Do they say that they see no striking marks of such opposition ; that the free ventilation of the proposal, in the newspapers and elsewhere, does not seem to have provoked it? I reply, I know the temper of the Southern people, at least of Southern Presbyterians. The reason they have not spoken out in thunder-tones

already is two-fold: first, they have hitherto been incredulous of a serious intention to force negroes into ecclesiastical superiority to themselves, and they have felt a disgust so profound for the whole proposition and the unseasonableness of its discussion that they have turned aside with loathing from the whole debate. But let this plan be put in practice, and if I know anything, I forewarn you, gentlemen, that you will spring a mine which will blow the engineers of negro equality high into the air.

Look, I pray you, at the *grounds* of this sentiment which you will outrage. For a generation Southern Christians have seen the negro made the pretext of a malignant and wicked assault upon their fair fame and just rights. At length he has been made the occasion of a frightful war, resulting in the conquest and ruin of the land, and the overthrow of all our civil rights. And now, our conquerors and oppressors, after committing the crime of murder against our noble old commonwealth and treading us down with the armed heel, are practicing to add to every atrocious injury the loathsome insult of placing the negro's feet upon our necks. This day we are threatened with evils, through negro supremacy and spoliation, to whose atrocity the horrors of the late war were tender mercies. And these ebony pets of this romantic philanthropy this day lend themselves in compact body, with an eager and almost universal willingness, to be the tools of this abhorred project, the scorpion—say rather the reptile—lash in the hands of our ruthless tyrants. But our brethren, turning heart-sore and indignant from their secular affairs, where nothing met their eye but a melancholy ruin, polluted by the intrusion of this inferior and hostile race, looked to their beloved church for a little repose. There at least, said they, is one pure, peaceful spot not yet reached by this pollution and tyranny. There, at least, Virginians may meet and act without the disgust of negro politics and the stain of negro domination. Will you, dare you, say to them, *No*? There too the hated subject and the foul intrusion shall be thrust upon you; thrust upon you by the folly of Southern men, of your own spiritual guides.

And now that every hope of the existence of church and of state, and of civilization itself, hangs upon our arduous effort to defeat the doctrine of negro suffrage, shall the General Assembly be invoked to go out of its province, and stretch its

constitution so as to set the most significant precedent which can be imagined *in favor* of this destructive doctrine?

But this is not all. Thoughtful men see in this pit of tyranny and oppression, to the edge of which the negro and his allies now urge us, "below the lowest depth a lower deep still opening wide." It is a result which, we well know, the astute architects of our ruin clearly foresee and intend, and for the procuring of which they provide, when they impose the political equality of the negro, with a cunning inspired by their own master, the devil. They know mankind in its weakness and baseness. They have measured accurately the degrading effects of subjugation, of poverty, of grinding oppression, of despair, upon a people once chivalrous. They know that where the ruling mob is there must be the demagogue, even as the vulture comes where the carcass is, and they know the bottomless subserviency of the demagogue. They understand the ever-increasing assumption of the negro's character, growing by its indulgence. Hence the safe calculation that, when once political equality is confirmed to the blacks, every influence will tend towards that other consummation, *social equality*, which they will be so keen to demand, and their demagogues so ready to grant as the price of their votes. Why, sir, the negroes recently elected in my own section to represent in the pretended convention, districts once graced by Henry and Randolph are already impudently demanding it. He must be "innocent" indeed who does not see whither all this tends, as it is designed by our oppressors to terminate. It is (shall I pronounce the abhorred word?) to *amalgamation*! Yes, sir, these tyrants know that if they can mix the race of Washington and Lee and Jackson with this base herd which they brought from the fens of Africa, if they can taint the blood which hallowed the plains of Manassas with this sordid stream, the adulterous current will never again swell a Virginian's heart with a throb noble enough to make a despot tremble. But they will then have, for all time, a race supple and grovelling enough for all the purposes of oppression. We have before our eyes, in Mexico, the proof and illustration of the satanic wisdom of their plan. There we saw a splendid colonial empire first blighted by abolition, then a frantic spirit of levelling, declaring the equality of the colored races with the Spaniard, and last, the mixture of the Castilian blood—the grandest of all the Gothic—

resulting in the mongrel rabble which is now the shame and plague of that wretched land.

Such is the danger which is now before us. Let no one say that these fears are visionary. Wise and sober statesmen do not think so. Ask those who know mankind, who know the springs of political action and the power of its passions; they will tell you that, *if such counsels are to rule* as have been insinuated here, the danger is real and near. Impartial and intelligent spectators abroad do not think my warning visionary. The *London Times*, in a well-considered leader, declared that a gradual mixture of blood was the obvious end to which present influences tended.

In view of this, our Christian people looked fondly to their beloved church as a last bulwark against this tide of shame and misery. But now are they told that this too must be levelled; levelled by the hands of their own spiritual guides; that they must submit, at the dictation of a romantic sophism, to an ecclesiastical amalgamation of which social confusion must be the inevitable result; a result all the surer because the ill-starred precedent is given for it in the highest range of our social life—the sacred.

And now, when they indignantly recoil, shall this high and noble sentiment be stigmatized as “a wicked prejudice of an evil world?” and shall this Synod be invoked, in the imposing names of principle and moral courage, to trample upon it? Sir, I protest against the slander. In the name of the enlightened and faithful people of God, who profoundly entertain this sentiment, I protest. By the indignant blush on the cheeks of our Christian wives and sisters, I protest. This is no blind, passionate prejudice of caste, but the righteous, rational instinct of pious minds. It is not the prejudice of a wicked world which I would have you respect; the world’s passions and blame are naught to me; but the conscientious conviction of Christ’s own people, who are as God-fearing and honest in this thing as you are. I wish to know by what patent the advocates of this novel and astounding doctrine have received a monopoly of all the consistency and conscientiousness, leaving our laity none?

If, in the presence of all these considerations, any leader in our Israel must still feel himself compelled by conscience and principle to demand of his brethren this concession, he should

feel that he is asking of them the most cruel and heart-rending sacrifice ever demanded by duty. We shall make it, if consistency requires it, with an anguish akin to that of Jephthah, when his rash vow compelled him to immolate his virgin daughter. Has this solemn, sympathizing sense of the sacrifice demanded been exhibited? No, sir. And I shall show before I am done that the imagined stress of conscience under which the bitter crucifixion is exacted of us is as baseless and unreasonable as was the superstitious obstinacy of that ancient robber-chief.

And if it shall appear that this Africanizing of our church is not duty, then how wretchedly untimely is the policy of fixing the odium of it on Presbyterianism at this time, of all others, when the whole American people are so manifestly beginning to array themselves on the issue between the white man's party and the black man's party; when this one issue is so completely absorbing all others; when the party of the white man's supremacy is gathering in such resistless might, and is so surely destined ultimately to sweep its opponent out of existence? Why attach our Presbyterianism to a doomed cause, to a type of opinion predestined to be exploded, and to leave, for all time, naught behind it but a savor of *odium* and abhorrence, cleaving for generations to all who have affiliated with it?

Let it be thoroughly considered how far this view must lead us, if squarely followed. Its advocates have much to say about "following out principles consistently without regarding popular inclinations." The attitude they assume is one of a calm superiority to such feelings. They have "risen above these mere prejudices of caste, as things unworthy of Christians." They deprecate my allusion to the practical consequences of their doctrine, as an unseemly appeal to the passions of a dead controversy, and the pride of a social order which has passed away, never to return. When I beseech them not to pervert and overstrain ecclesiastical principles in a manner not only needless, but positively erroneous, so as to make Christ's church virtually a tool for the propagation of the political heresies of negro suffrage and amalgamation, they reply with a grand dignity, that the church is a spiritual kingdom, and does not concern herself *pro* or *con* with secular results. To my common sense, the application thus given to a truth most valuable in its place, is virtually this: that if the church has an opportunity, without

going an inch out of her spiritual sphere, and indeed, by the very fidelity with which she adheres to it, to give valuable support to earthly interests the most fundamental and precious, oh! then she has perverted her character; she is meddling with secular questions! But if she misunderstands and perverts her own spiritual character, to corrupt at once her own government and peace, and to give, under a spiritual pretext, most direct assistance to the vilest factionists in their assaults upon the dearest rights and interests of the community, it is all perfectly spiritual and legitimate!

Now then, gentlemen, come with me, and let us see whither this iron consistency in which you boast will lead us. You say that if a negro appears to have a scriptural call and qualification, you have no option, but must make him your own co-presbyter and ecclesiastical equal. Thus at once he becomes a joint ruler over white churches; he must sit, and speak, and vote among you. I shall not permit you to use the quiet hypocrisy of those Yankees whom you permit so imperiously to dictate your action in this matter; who after making a negro in pretense their co-presbyter and equal, give him a tacit but imperative hint to take himself off to the colored gallery, and thence witness the presbyterial proceedings as a very humble spectator. This will not do in your case; you are thoroughly consistent. So you must have this negro of yours reviewing and censuring the records of white sessions, and sitting to judge appeals brought before you by white parties, possibly by white ladies!

But this is a small part. After all the negro exodus from our communion, there are still churches which have a large majority of black communicants. After you have ordained your negro, one of these churches may regularly elect him pastor. Constitutionally, the white minority cannot here resist the will of the majority, when regularly exercised. Suppose the former come to you for remedy. Can you tell them to take dismissions and join a white church elsewhere? Distance may forbid. Besides, you will be bound by that jewel, consistency, to tell them that such a solution of their trouble would be wholly out of the question. You made race and color no obstacle to putting this negro equal to yourselves; how can you encourage these white members in making them a pretext to rend a church roll? Consistency will require you to say to them, "Remain and submit."

So there you have a black pastor to white families, clothed with official title to ask their experimental, heart secrets; to visit their sick beds; to celebrate baptisms, marriages and funerals over their children! And this, on your principle, is no Utopian picture, but what may become a literal fact in a month after you execute your plan.

Now, is any one so fond as to believe still that this can be honestly, squarely done, and yet social equality can be denied? Do you tell me that after you have admitted this negro thus to your debates, your votes, your pulpits, your sick and dying beds, your weddings and funerals, you will still exclude him from your parlors and tables? *Credat Judeus Apella!* I tell you, sir, this doctrine, if it does not mean nothing, or if it does not mean Yankee hypocrisy, means ultimately, *amalgamation*. What more emphatic evidence did ever a traveller bring back to us of the utter confusion of bloods in Spanish America, than to tell us that he there saw black priests to white people? But now, when the negro is grasping political equality, when he is no longer an inferior and in servitude, when his temper is assuming and impudent in many cases, when in many sections he out-numbers the whites, it becomes both church and civil society to guard this danger with tenfold as much jealousy as when they were our servants.

Are we then shut up by principle to this most repugnant thing? Do the Bible and our standards require us in consistency to introduce black men into all our church courts as our equals, and as spiritual rulers of the laity of the superior race? This, Moderator, is the cardinal question. If God and duty require *any* sacrifice, *let it be made. Fiat justitia ruat cælum*. I trust I shall not be behind any of my brethren in temperament or conviction when the true necessity arises for acting upon this severe maxim. But I have desired that you should have fully before you the true extent of the concession demanded of you, that if it shall appear the logical exigency is imaginary, and the argument demanding it a transparent sophism, you may be delivered from so cruel an error.

It has been argued here that the gospel is a religion for universal man, and that participation in the blessings of redemption is decided, not by any reference to race, class, or social grade, but by the person's faith and repentance alone. This blessed

truth, it is presumed, every true Christian joyfully believes. We have been reminded of the apostle Peter, who was taught by vision not to "call that common which God had cleansed," and was thus forced to overcome his prejudices of caste, and receive Gentiles to an equal place in the church with Jews.

And this instance reminds me of a truth, which I beg leave to commend to gentlemen of the other side, that our brother Peter found, very soon, that *this consequence* was natural and necessary, which they so stoutly disclaim; namely, that the ecclesiastical equality involved social equality. Peter, after admitting Gentiles to an equal footing in the church, was obliged to admit them on an equal footing to his table and parlor, and was found "eating with the Gentiles." "But when certain came from Jerusalem, he dissembled, and withdrew himself." So, I predict, will these our brethren be found "dissembling" when they are brought face to face with the awkward consequences of their present position. And I pledge them, that I shall not fail to be their Paul, to rebuke them for their inconsistency, and insist that they face the music of their own levelling doctrine. But this by the way.

They quote for us also such passages as these: that in Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all in all." Hence they jump to the inference, that not only the blessings of redemption, but the privileges of church office and rule, are common to all believers, irrespective of caste, class, or condition. I shall show, sir, beyond all cavil, that there is a vast and an unbridged chasm between this premise and this conclusion. The argument is, that because the blessings of redemption are common to all classes and races of true believers, therefore it follows, of course, that every privilege and grade of church power must be made common to them. But the answer is, that several Bible instances themselves show that this consequence does not follow. None here will dispute that the Old Testament church had a gospel; nor will any deny that its saving blessings were common to *all believing Hebrews*, though not to all Gentiles. But lo! the priesthood, the clerical function of the day, was expressly limited to the tribe of Levi! In Galatians iii. 28—a passage parallel to the one quoted against me—St. Paul says: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there

is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Blessed doctrine! Yet the same apostle says, "I suffer not a woman to teach;" thus excluding from official privilege, on grounds of class, one-half of the whole Christian world, which he had just declared to be "all one in Christ Jesus." So you see, gentlemen, that the apostle Paul evidently did not believe in your argument. Miss Antoinette Brown and Mrs. Abby Kelly were precisely with you; but the apostle was not. Again, the apostle, in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, rules that no convert who was implicated, before his conversion, in polygamy, must be ordained a presbyter; for so the best expositors view 1 Timothy iii. 2, and Titus i. 6. Here is another exclusion on grounds of class. Surely no one will argue that these husbands of more than one wife were excluded because they *had been* sinners. Had not the apostle himself been a murderer? Or on the grounds that they were still living in sin; for this would also have excluded them from the *church*. It is an exclusion *on grounds of class*, and independent of the question of their faith and repentance. Thus we have three instances, confirmed by inspiration itself, showing that the supposed consequence does not hold, and that it is not true that all distinctions of class are abolished as to church office, because they are abolished as to church membership.

But here our opponents resort to an evasion, drawn from the very fact that these instances are confirmed by revelation. They plead: the limitation is right, we admit, in these three cases, because God made it himself. But man has no right to make any other limitation at all.

Again, I answer, no; you shall not change your ground. Your argument just now was that an entire community in church office followed from the admitted community in church membership, *by the very nature of the case*. But I showed you that this did not follow, because God has decided the contrary, in three cases; and he cannot do wrong. I claim, therefore, that the argument is mine. I have manifestly taken away your position; I have removed from under you the very ground on which you yourselves placed your conclusion. It is vain to seek another; the case is mine.

I answer, second, that even if it were allowable for you to change your ground, your new ground is not true. It is not

true that the church has no right to place such limitations upon the common claim to church office in cases other than the three which God has made. For she has claimed, and has exercised, this very power on grounds of class, and has been justified in doing so by all the divines and ecclesiastics, *certainly by you*. One instance of this was presented by the primitive church, which, from the very days of the apostles onward, always refused to ordain slaves although they freely admitted them to the church. Have you ever heard any one, Mr. Moderator, charge this usage as unscriptural? Another instance of a hundred and fifty years standing was presented by the Presbyterian Church in the United States, which in all that time never ordained a slave. Yet they were freely admitted to the church membership, and during all that time we constantly preached to them that "in Christ Jesus there was neither bond nor free." But we all—you, gentlemen, as much as I—exercised and justified the power of limiting the privileges of office from them. Where was then your doctrine, that the universality of the gospel left the church no power to restrain any church office or power from any class? Where the overtures and demands that the Assembly should declare color and race no barrier to ordaining a negro as the spiritual ruler of white men, provided he had the other qualifications? You did not even demand their ordination as pastors of blacks, and you were right then by the same showing that you are wrong now.

But, Mr. Moderator, there is an evasion at hand here also. It is that the law of the land then gave masters rights over the labor of their servants, and that our allegiance to Cæsar—which is a scriptural duty—then made it obligatory on us not to interfere with this secular right. But now Cæsar has declared the Africans free. This plea will not do, and for two reasons. All the time, there was a multitude of free negroes in the North and in the South, but no Presbyterian asked that one of these should be made equal to us as teacher and ruler over white men in our church, and south of the Potomac no free black was ordained, so far as I know, even to preach to our servants. The second reason is, that man's spiritual interests are more priceless than his secular; that the church, the guardian of the former, is independent of all but Christ in caring for them, so that if this right of Christian slaves to preach was sacred and indefeasible

under the gospel, it was your solemn duty to tell their owners so, and to demand in Christ's name their emancipation, in order that they might preach. Where then was this high doctrine which is now held up to be so imperative? and where that towering moral courage in defying prejudice and consequences?

Now, I ask emphatically, what change has taken place in the black race to make them more fit for ruling over white churches than they then were? Are they any wiser any more religious, any purer, any more enlightened now? Nay; the only change is a violent revolution, made by the sword, by which, as every intelligent Virginian knows, they have been only injured in character as in destiny. Hence, I cannot see why an ecclesiastical policy towards them which was wise and right and scriptural then, is not at least as much so now. But it is said, "Then they were by law slaves; now they are by law free." I reply, does Christ's kingdom wait on the politicians and conquerors of the world, to be told by them how she must administer her sacred charge? Where now is that fastidiousness which a little while ago said so loftily that the church was a spiritual commonwealth, and had no concern, *pro* or *con*, with seculars? I invoke it *here*; *this* is the place for it to assert itself, where I demand for the church the right to carry out still her own scriptural polity towards the Africans, as she has practiced it for a hundred and fifty years, justified by all sound Presbyterians North and South, and to pursue the even tenor of her way regardless of the decision of the sword and faction; and *not there*, where the imposing plea was but a pretext for assailing the dearest earthly interests of your fellow citizens through a sophistical perversion of our spiritual charter.

The truth is, Mr. Moderator, the doctrine I oppose involves covertly the whole conclusion of the abolitionist. If, as is here argued, membership in Christ's church secures to all, irrespective of class and condition, the indefeasible right to church office; and if the civil government imposes on a class of Christians a condition practically inconsistent with their enjoying such spiritual franchise, then that secular order is intrinsically anti-Christian and unrighteous; for the soul is above the body, eternity is more than time, man's spiritual liberties are more indefeasible than any social relation, and God is above Cæsar. If this doctrine I oppose is true now, it was true from 1706 to 1865.

The rights of masters, which prevented you from putting that doctrine in practice, were essentially criminal. The church was continually derelict in not testifying so and preaching abolition. And our holy fathers lived and died in sin. This conclusion is inevitable. Ask Henry Ward Beecher; he will tell you that the links of this deduction are adamant, if your premise, which is his, touching the right of negroes to clerical equality, be granted. Therefore I know that it is false.

But it is urged with great confidence, "If God, by the call of his providence and Spirit, says to a black Christian, Preach, how can the church dare to forbid him, on the mere ground of the color of his skin?" *If* God says to any one, Preach, of course we must not bid him forbear. But not so fast. This short argument assumes several essential things very wide of the truth. In the first place, it is very far from being the same thing, that a given branch of the church, composed of a given people, shall say to an alien whom God may have called to preach, "We do not wish you to teach and rule us;" and that they shall say to him, "Preach not at all." Next, it by no means follows that a man, white or black, is called of God because he thinks he is called of God. If I know anything of the doctrine of *vocation*, as taught by the Scriptures, our constitution, and the great Reformed divines, it includes these truths: that no man's call to preach or rule is valid until the people of God voluntarily echo it, inviting and electing him to teach and rule them; that even as the Holy Ghost moves the soul of him whom Christ calls to preach, so the same Spirit moves the hearts of Christ's people to approve and select him; that the Spirit is as much in the body as in the clergy; and that his divine voice, as uttered in the two, cannot contradict itself. Now, by what right can any man, black or white, assume that he is unquestionably commissioned of God to teach and rule in this church, when this church distinctly demurs that her God, whose Spirit is as much in her heart as in the man most certainly called, has not prompted her to accept and prefer that particular man's teaching? By what right will any man assume that the body of our pious and enlightened laity has rejected God's voice in this thing, and has wickedly mistaken an old caste prejudice for a scriptural disqualification, while the negro—because, I suppose, he has a black skin—shall be assumed as right of course in his aspira-

tions? There is no possible risk, is there, of his mistaking conceit, vanity, lust of power, forwardness, ambition, impudence, for the spiritual impulse to intrude himself upon white Christians? No one, I presume, will take this ground; for this would be equivalent to saying that the religious consciousness of a negro, because he is a negro, is a so much truer vehicle of the mind of the Spirit than that of a white man, that the assumption of any black candidate for the ministry is better entitled to credit as the voice of the Spirit than the refusal of a whole church of educated, pious, enlightened, white Presbyterians. The force of abolition frenzy could no farther go. No, sir, there is no adequate proof of God's call until the church freely recognizes and seconds it. Hence, it is a begging of the question to argue that, when a church intelligently and conscientiously withholds her call, she forbids him whom God commands to preach.

Let us now briefly review the points established. The universality of gospel blessings to all believers does not carry with it a universal right to church office, as was asserted. God has often restrained the latter on grounds of class or natural distinction where he has conceded the former. God has given to his church discretion to restrain it for similar cause in suitable unrevealed instances. The church has in every age exercised this lawful discretion for her own general edification. The case of the negroes among us presents just such an instance where the wise exercise of the scriptural discretion is proper. For, as I have shown, the setting up of black men to rule white Presbyterians is, on every account, not for the church's true edification. Here, it may be added, it would be as mischievous to the souls of the blacks as it is odious to the whites. For instance, how many negroes are there in all the South who would not, in an era of unhealthy excitement and approaching strife of races like this, be utterly spoiled by this elevation? How many would retain to the end their sobriety, their modesty, their sound discretion, under a condition so utterly foreign to their previous experiences?

I am opposed, therefore, to the attempt to establish a clerical equality between the two races, in the same churches and judicatories, as being bad for us and bad for them. It may be well to attempt an answer to the natural question: What alternative do you propose? I reply, that I would first kindly invite and ad-

wise the black people to remain as they were, members of our churches and under our instruction and church government; for I am well assured that this would prove best for their true interests. But if they will not be wise enough to agree to this, while I deplore their mistake, I would still attempt to do them all the good possible which can be done without injustice to our church and by righteous means. Then, as the second alternative, I would assist and encourage them to build up a black Presbyterian Church, ecclesiastically independent of, and separate from, ours, but in relations of friendship and charity. To this end I would extend to them ministerial and missionary labor liberally. I would aid them in church building, I would provide schools, separate from our own, for training black men to be pastors of black churches, and I would, if necessary, give ordination to enough men to form a separate presbytery, when enough can be found possessed of constitutional qualifications. But I would make no black man a member of a white session, or Presbytery, or Synod, or Assembly; nor would I give them any share in the government of our own church, nor any representation in it. "It is confusion."

PRELACY A BLUNDER.¹

GROUNDEN ON ERRONEOUS EXPOSITION.

TWO theories of Christianity prevail in Christendom which are in fact essentially opposite. If one is the gospel of God, then the other cannot be. To him who heartily holds the one, the assertor of the other must be as one who "brings another gospel," and who ought to "be Anathema Maranatha." That the advocates of these incompatible schemes should co-exist, and should have co-existed for three hundred years, in the bosom of the same communion, can only be accounted for by the stringency of the political influences which originally dictated the unnatural union, and by the absurdity of that theory of the church which requires its tolerance. The hatred of Queen Elizabeth for the gospel, with what she regarded as her diplomatic and secular interests, prompted her to coerce the two religions into cohabitation in the state church by the despotic hand of persecution. The blunder of making a visible unity an essential attribute of the church, where Christ required only a spiritual unity, has betrayed both parties into a dread of "the sin of schism," which holds them to the hollow mockery of union.

The one of these plans of salvation may be described with sufficient accuracy as the high-prelatic, held by Rome, the Greek Church and the Episcopalian ritualists. It is often called the theory of "sacramental grace"; not because the other party denies all grace through sacraments, but because the sacramentarian party makes the sacraments essential to the reception of grace. The dogma of a tactual succession, through prelates, from the apostles, is its corner-stone. This dogma teaches that the apostles transmitted their peculiar office by ordination to the prelatic bishops and metropolitans; and with it a peculiar *χάρισμα* of the Holy Ghost, which is conferred in every case of canonical prelatical ordination, by the Lord Jesus Christ, through the

¹ This article appeared in *The Southern Presbyterian Review*, January, 1876.

laying on of the prelate's hands; making every "priest" thus ordained a depository of the spiritual energy, and every "bishop" (apostle) a "proxy" of the Saviour himself, endued with these gifts, in the same sense in which he was endued with them by his Father. Thus, Dr. Hammond, for instance, with the current of prelatists, interprets our Saviour's words, John xx. 21, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." This *χάρισμα*, transmitted in ordination, includes a spiritual superintendence which keeps the clergy orthodox—and as represented in their head, the Pope, says Rome, infallible—in expounding the gospel to souls. It also enables them to put into the sacraments a supernatural energy of the Spirit, by which they omnipotently *work grace*, and are not mere means of grace. Rome was accustomed to say in her scholastic nomenclature, that her sacraments wrought saving graces, *ex opere operato*; by which she seems to have meant, that the manipulation itself effected the gracious result, without any dependence on any state of knowledge, holy desire, penitence, or faith, in the recipient; even as calomel would touch the liver of the patient who supposed that he had taken only a bread pill. The ritualists assert substantially the same view in teaching the baptismal regeneration of an unconscious or sleeping infant by the application of the water. Rome teaches that her sacraments are so absolutely essential and efficient that no soul can be introduced into a state of grace save by them. The Anglican ritualists say that without the prelatie sacraments the soul is left to the "uncovenanted mercies."

Thus the theory of the gospel dispensation described amounts to this: that Christ's provision for applying his mercy for man consisted simply in his instituting on earth a successive hierarchy as his "proxies," empowered to work, through his sacraments, the salvation of submissive participants by a supernatural power, precisely analogous to that by which he enabled Peter to speak in an unknown tongue, and by which Peter and John enabled the lame man to walk.

It is perfectly obvious that if this claim of *χάρισμα* bestowed in prelatie ordination is unfounded; if the only energies of the Holy Spirit now bestowed on men are given to them, not as priests or prelates, but as penitent, believing, praying sinners; if they are given by the Holy Ghost in his own gracious and

sovereign intercourse with souls, through no other mediator than Christ, and by the means of the word and ordinances intelligently apprehended and embraced; if this communion in his grace is as common to the layman as to the clergyman, then the whole scheme of sacramental grace above described is a dream. Then the dependence on that hierarchy and its sacraments, working *ex opere operato*, is related to true Christianity precisely as is a fetich or a pagan incantation. It is an attempt to heal the soul by a series of acts of ecclesiastical jugglery. It is not asserted that the transaction carries all this profanity and mischief to every misguided votary. As in so many other instances, so here; grace may render men's subjective faith better than their dogmas; the Holy Spirit may mercifully disarm the destructive points of the evil theory, and turn the soul's attention to the other parts containing an element of truth. We doubt not that many devout minds under this sacramentarian teaching, embrace, with a true though obscure faith, the saving didactic truths so beautifully taught in the sacraments and in the Scriptures. But they do so in spite of this Gentile error which overlays the doctrine of redemption, not in consequence of it. The theory itself is, essentially, superstition, and not Christianity.

The rival scheme of the application of redemption is that summed up in the words of our Saviour: "Sanctify them *through thy truth*; thy word is truth." The apostle Paul declares it in one word: "It pleased God, by the foolishness of *preaching*, to save *them that believe*." (1 Cor. i. 21.) So in Rom. x. 4-17: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved. . . . So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." John i. 12: "As many as received him, to them gave he power (*ἐξουσίαν*) to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name." Eph. iii. 17: Christ "dwells in your hearts *by faith*." 1 John v. 11, 12: "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his son. He that hath (*ἔχει*, holds) the Son, hath the life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not the life." The previous part of the chapter proves that the holding of the Son is faith on him. But to cite all the proofs of this view would be to repeat nearly the whole of both Testaments. Ps. xix. 7-10; cxix. 9, 93, 98, 104, 130; Prov. iv. 13; Isaiah xxxiii. 6, liii. 11;

Jer. iii. 15; Hos. iv. 6; Hab. ii. 14; 1 John v. 1; 1 Pet. i. 23; Luke viii. 11; 1 Cor. iv. 15; John viii. 32; James i. 18; John v. 24; xv. 3; Acts xiii. 26; xx. 32; 1 Pet. ii. 2. And here, at the outset, is an insuperable objection to the scheme of sacramental grace, that it is irreconcilable with this universal teaching, repeated in such multifarious forms. For its constant doctrine is: the Son of God having purchased redemption for his people by his vicarious work, that salvation is actually applied to their souls by the agency of his Spirit, through the means of his word, taught, intelligently apprehended and embraced by faith, without other conditions or *media*. Hence, all preachers, even inspired evangelists and apostles, instead of being a mediating hierarchy, are "*ministers* by whom we believed;" themselves partaking of redemption precisely as the believing layman does. The sacraments are but "*means of grace*," presenting the truth in symbol, and while greatly instructing and assuring the faith of the believer already in Christ, yet doing it no otherwise than the word also does it. Christ reserves the administration of them to the ministers whom he calls in the church, not on any hierarchical or sacerdotal ground, but simply on grounds of *ἐνταξία* and didactic propriety.

Which of these theories is the more favorable to priestcraft, priestly assumption, and spiritual tyranny, may be seen without a word. We shall not say that this tendency is the thing which commends the doctrine to all prelatists; it would be puerile to deny that history shows us a multitude of them using it for a weapon of despotism over souls, and still another multitude of prelatists, less malicious but more romantic, cherishing it at the unconscious promptings of self-importance. It is a fine thing when a poor mortal can believe himself the channel of eternal life to his subject fellow-creature—the "*proxy*" of the Son of God and King of Heaven. The motives which have led the majority of nominal Christians to hold a theory so glaringly opposed to Scripture are complex, but easily detected. On the part of the hierarchy, those motives are lust of power and pride of importance. On the part of the laity, they are the natural tendency to find a concrete object for the instinct of superstitious veneration, the terror of the despotism in which they have been reared to believe, holding the issues of their salvation or damnation at its option, and, above all, the intense craving of

the sinful heart, remorseful yet impenitent, for a palpable mode of reconciliation to God without the prior necessity of the sincere crucifixion of self and sin. As long as men are weak, superstitious, depraved, and conscious of guilt, sacramentarianism must have abundant followers.

This prelatie theory is founded on the following assumption as its corner-stone : that episcopal ordination *confers* the spiritual gifts, or *χαρίσματα*, of spiritual powers, instead of merely *recognizing* ministerial qualifications and conferring official title. And this assumption, in its turn, rests upon the false claim that the acts of apostles laying on hands to confer the Holy Ghost, as in Acts viii. 17, 2 Tim. i. 6, are the prelates' precedents and warrants for it. The especial object of this discussion is to overthrow this false foundation. If it can be shown that this employment of these passages of Scripture is essential to the prelatie theory of orders and sacramental grace, and that prelatists do in fact so usurp them, and if it can then be evinced that these Scriptures relate to a wholly different subject when properly understood, and have nothing to do with scriptural ordination to clerical office, then the whole system of prelacy is effectually undermined.

I. Our first position, then, is, that the advocates of sacramental grace do in fact usurp those passages in which the *χάρισμα* of working supernatural "signs" is conferred or promised as the authority for their false scheme of ordination to their so-called priesthood. If they did not, they would have no show of Scripture proof-texts whatever to support the wondrous fabric. This position must be supported by citations from their own authorities, ancient and modern. But as the prelatie scheme was the gift of Rome to the modern churches, we will begin with her most authoritative standards, the *Decrees and Catechism of the Tridentine Council*. First, In the Catechism, Part II., Chap. vii., Quest. 25, The administration of the "sacrament of orders" belongs to the bishop, "which it will be easy to demonstrate by the authority of the sacred Scriptures, most certain tradition," etc. The texts cited here (such as Acts vi. 5, 6; xiv. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6) show that Trent asserts this because she holds bishops to be apostles, and because she usurps these texts erroneously. Then, in the decrees concerning the "sacrament of orders," Session 23d, she proceeds thus :

"I. Sacrifice and priesthood are so conjoined by the ordination of God, that each has existed under all dispensations [This New Testament priesthood] has been instituted by the same Lord, our Saviour, and the sacred Scriptures show, as the tradition of the Catholic Church has always taught, that the power of consecrating, sacrificing, and distributing his body and blood, and also of remitting sins, has been delivered to the apostles and their successors in the priesthood."

"III. It is plain from the testimony of Scripture, apostolic tradition, and the unanimous consent of the fathers, that *grace is conferred* by holy orders, which are solemnized by words and exterior signs," etc.

"Canon IV. If anybody says that the *Holy Ghost is not given by holy orders*, and that accordingly the bishops have no ground to say [to the recipient], '*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*,' or that the character is not impressed through this sacrament, etc., let him be accursed."

Rom. Catechism, *De Ordine*, Chap. VII., Sec. 28:

"But it is certain that, although the sacrament of orders, as before stated, regards very greatly the advantage and beauty of the church, yet it also works in the soul of him who is initiated into sacred things, the grace of sanctification, by which he is rendered fit and able for the right performance of his duty, and for the administration of the sacraments, just as a person, by the grace of baptism" [baptismal regeneration,] "is fitted for receiving the other sacraments. It is plain that another grace also is ascribed to this sacrament," [ordination,] "viz.: *the special power* which relates to the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, which power is in the priest, full and perfect, so that he alone is able to make the body and blood of our Lord," etc.

Let us pause here to introduce one proof of Rome's misunderstanding. She expressly teaches that this gift of the Holy Ghost conferred in ordination, and this character impressed, *are not the illumination and sanctification* which make men believers and saints. For Rome holds that men can "fall from grace," while they can never lose this gift and character. Rome holds that the ordained man may be all his life unconverted, and still he has the whole gift and character. Now, then, if they are not saving grace, what are they? The only other kind of *χάρισμα* of the Holy Ghost known in Scripture is that gift of supernatural tongues and signs which Judas had, which was conferred sometimes on females and children, and which 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, describes as compatible with spiritual death. But the texts which Rome quotes to sustain her dogma clearly betray the same thing. They are mainly and foremost, John xx. 21, 22; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6, with some others not even apparently relevant. But on these three she "rings the changes" throughout the chapters, and especially on John xx. 21, 22.

Before we examine these texts more nearly, let us also look at the doctrine of the Anglican Church. In the form for the consecration of bishops, the following words are addressed to the

candidate by the presiding bishop, as he and his assessors lay their hands upon his head :

“Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a bishop in the church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Then follows the exact language of 2 Tim. i. 6. And one of the Scriptures directed to be read before the consecration is John xx. 21. The Anglican Church has learned her lesson from Rome accurately in this matter. The same formula of words is also put into the bishop's mouth for ordaining a “priest,” along with an alternative which is less unscriptural. Bishop Cummins, in ordaining Bishop Cheney, refused to employ the unscriptural language of Rome, because he had repudiated her theory of sacramental grace. He discloses the interesting fact, that it was not until the twelfth century that these superstitious words were finally established in the Romish formulary, and that, to this day, they are not used in that of the Greek Church. It required all the ignorance, superstition, and priestly imposture of the dark ages to prepare the way for this usurpation of the teachings of Scripture.

Let us now see whether the three texts support the dogma of such a “gift of the Holy Ghost,” actually conferred by a prelate's hands in our day, in ordinary consecration of a minister, or whether they do not belong to wholly another matter. 1 Tim. iv. 14, and 2 Tim. i. 6, are parallel verses in part. The first reads, “Neglect not the gift (*χάρισμα*) that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on (*μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως*) of the hands of the presbytery.” The second, “Stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on (*ὅτι τῇ ἐπιθέσει*) of my hands.” The interpretation which we shall establish at a more appropriate stage for these verses is, that the latter refers to a time when Paul, by his peculiar, apostolic power, and with the laying on of his hands, conferred on Timothy a *χάρισμα* of supernatural working, just like that he conferred on the disciples at Ephesus (Acts xix. 6), and that the former contains a double reference to this same endowment by Paul and to Timothy's regular presbyterial ordination to office as a minister, the two having probably been near or at the same time.

Let us now look at John xx. 21, 22, which prelatists evidently regard as the mainstay of their dogma. Christ is now risen.

Meeting ten of the apostles at night, he says, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." To the Protestant these words are plain enough—Christ is God-man, Redeemer, High Priest, Sacrifice, King and Intercessor to his people. These offices he devolves on nobody, but holds them always. But he condescended for a time to be "sent" by his Father, in the humble office of a preacher in the church. This office he now devolves on his twelve apostles. They, as his heralds and ministers, are to proclaim and explain to mankind the terms on which sins are pardoned by him, "for who can forgive sins but God only?" But as they would enjoy the guidance of inspiration, their publication of their Master's forgiveness would be authoritative, and would be ratified by him in heaven. (Compare Matt. xvi. 19.) For thus setting up the new dispensation, the apostles needed supernatural assistance, and it had been promised to them before the crucifixion. (John xvi. 13.) They were, at the proper time, to be inspired. They would also need to be accompanied by some supernatural attestations. These also the Holy Ghost would work by and in them. These gifts Christ now ensures to them by a significant act, while he repeats the promise as near its fulfilment. That the gift of the Holy Ghost which he now bestowed was the very same exercised by the apostles in the day of Pentecost, is made as clear as a sunbeam by Christ's own words as recorded by Luke, Acts i. 4, 5, "Depart not from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, *which ye have heard of me*. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." *When* did they hear this promise from him? Evidently on the night described by John xx. 21, 22. Thus that gift of the Spirit, whose bestowal was then symbolized by the act of breathing upon them, is identified with the effusion of the day of Pentecost. What that was all know (Acts ii. 2-4), a miraculous inspiration.

Thus when prelatists claim this promise of John xx. 21, 22, as the foundation of their doctrine of orders and supposed power to work sacramental grace, they claim what Christ applied to a

totally different matter from ordination: the bestowal of supernatural powers of the Holy Ghost. Our charge is made out by their capital text.

The next proof-text quoted by Rome and by the Anglican divines is Acts vi. 3, the appointment of the first recorded deacons: "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Then (verses 5, 6) the multitude chose, and the apostles set them apart by laying on of hands and prayer. To the plain Protestant reader it would seem that this instance is totally irrelevant to prove that ordination *confers a gift of the Holy Ghost*. For the possession of that gift by the seven men was the prerequisite qualification for ordination which, because the gift was already possessed, conferred simply the diaconal office. But stay: Rome wishes to imply in spite of this that the apostles' hands *conferred the χάρισμα*. Chrysostom argues expressly that Stephen is not heard of as exercising that gift until after this laying on of hands, when (verse 8) he "did great wonders and miracles among the people." The interpretation is false, but it none the less establishes the charge with which we set out, that prelacy erroneously builds upon these instances of supernatural gifts, when in fact they belong not to the matter of ordination to the ministry at all as results thereof. It may be added here, that the Pentecostal church being adorned with many instances of these extraordinary gifts *among its laymen*, the apostles deemed it proper, for the time, to take the deacons from among these laymen thus honored of God. The occasion of their choice was a threatened faction in the church, and they wished the present appointment to carry universal confidence. But when we turn to 1 Tim. iii. 8, etc., where we find the regular qualifications for the diaconal office defined for customary times, the power of tongues and miracles is not heard of among them.

Our next proof that the prelatists have actually built their theory on the mistaken foundation is also historical. Every intelligent reader knows the monstrous lengths to which the abuse of purchasing ordination to clerical office went in the Romish and Anglican churches. It was the glory of the administration of the great Pope Hildebrand, Gregory VII., to resist this abuse, but it has never been conquered. Now, prelacy

has given it a name which exactly and technically separates it from all other sins. That name is *simony*. It is confessedly taken from Simon the Samaritan, usually known as Simon Magus, in that act which is described in Acts viii. 14–21. Philip the evangelist, though supernaturally qualified for preaching by the *χάρισμα* which he had before he was appointed deacon, and though competent to convert and baptize people, yet was not an apostle; and hence he could not confer these extraordinary gifts by laying on hands. Hence, the church newly planted in Samaria as yet lacked that honor. Peter and John, apostles, were sent down to confer it. Those on whom they laid their hands received these visible *χαρίσματα*. Doubtless they spake with unknown tongues or prophesied, for the result was obvious to Simon's observation as a spectator (verse 18). The same ambition which has moved so many an assertor of prelacy since to claim this peculiar apostolic power moved him. He proposed to give them money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands he may receive the Holy Ghost." Note the thing Simon craved was not the ability to speak with tongues or work a miraculous sign. Possibly he had received this as a reprobate Judas received similar powers. He desired *the ability to confer this power on others*. And this criminal proposal, so perfectly defined by Simon's own words, is precisely the thing which Rome and the Anglican Church have selected to denominate the sin of procuring clerical orders by money. The fact is evinced yet more clearly by another trait. The canon law of Rome declares that an ordination procured by simony is null and void *ab initio*, and all priestly acts done by the man thus ordained are utterly invalid. The Hildebrands, more righteous than the Anglican dignitaries, actually enforced this law. The scriptural basis of it is the words of Peter, "*Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter.*"

Thus prelacy shows that in its apprehension the imposition of hands by Peter and John on these Samaritan converts, and the consequent possession of the extraordinary *χάρισμα* was a precedent and a basis for their doctrine of orders. The disclosure is complete. Prelacy deems that when a man purchases of the bishops the powers conferred as they claim in Episcopal ordination, he commits the identical sin attempted by Simon. But did these apostles then ordain those members of the new

Samaritan church to clerical office? Obviously they did not, but did wholly another thing: conferred on some laymen, and possibly women, a *χάρισμα* of supernatural powers. Thus the sheer usurpation and misconception of the Scripture by the prelatist is again disclosed.

Our next testimony is even a more express betrayal of the blunder. It is from the *Parainesis* of Dr. Hammond, *Quere 5th*: “*Χειροθεσία* is answerable to that imposition of hands in ordination so often mentioned in the New Testament . . . as generally when *by that laying on of hands it is said they received the Holy Ghost*; where the Holy Ghost contains all the *χαρίσματα* required for the pastoral function, and also signifies power from on high,” etc.

Dr. Hammond here betrays the fact that his prelatist error was carried by him through the whole New Testament. Quoth he, “Generally by *that laying on of hands*,” [*scilicet*, ordination to clerical office,] “it is said they received the Holy Ghost.” But it is never said of any ordination to clerical office that the clergyman received the Holy Ghost from his ordination; never once within the lids of the New Testament. But hear him again: “*Of this ceremony, thus used*” (meaning imposition of hands for ordination) “several mentions there are. First, Acts viii. 17, where, after Philip the deacon had preached and baptized in Samaria, Peter and John the apostles came from Jerusalem to perfect the work, and laid hands on them [not on all that were baptized, but on some special persons whom they thought meet] and they received the Holy Ghost.”

This pious Anglican prelatist thus declares expressly the same mistake which his predecessors in error had made when they supposed that the sin of obtaining ordination by a bribe was just the sin which Simon Magus committed.

To show that this was the traditionary and original ground of prelacy, we will now go backwards, and cite two examples of the same false exposition from the most learned of the Greek fathers. Theophylact, on 2 Tim. i. 6, gives as the equivalent of the words, *ὁ δὲ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν μου*, this gloss: *Τούτ' ἐστὶ, ὅτε σε ἐχειροτονοῦν ἐπίσκοπον*. He thus expressly confounds the appointment to clerical office with an apostle's bestowal of spiritual gifts. Chrysostom, on Acts vi. 8, says: “See how one man (Stephen) was præminent among those seven, and held a pri-

macy. For although their ordination was common among them, yet this man derived a larger grace. But before this ordination he wrought no signs, but only after he was manifested. This was designed to teach them that grace alone was not sufficient, but that ordination is requisite in order that the access of the Spirit may take place."

It is still the same obstinate misconception : that ordination is the bestowal of supernatural gifts, instead of the recognition of gracious qualifications for clerical duties.

The prelatical conception of an application of redemption exclusively by sacramental grace has been thus carefully explained, and its founding, by its own architects, upon an imaginary scriptural basis has been evinced, because so many, even of Protestants, fail to conceive it aright. We repeat, then, the prelatist supposes that the grace of Christ is applied to the soul, not as the Bible teaches, by the Holy Spirit, through the word rationally apprehended and embraced by faith, but by the Holy Spirit working miraculously, without the truth, but through a priestly and sacramental hand, just as when, through a miracle-worker, he casts out a demon or heals a leper. In the eyes of the prelatist, ordination is not the conferring of a didactic and ruling ministration proceeding on the candidate's previous possession of natural and gracious qualifications, but it is a miracle wrought upon the candidate by the hand of an apostle, enabling him in turn to work certain other miracles. When the priest, clothed with this endowment, consecrates the eucharist, he truly works a miracle, then and there converting bread and wine into the real flesh and blood of Christ, and conveying by them supernatural and spiritual life into the souls of the persons in whose mouths he puts the elements. So, when he applies the water of baptism to an infant, he works another miracle by it; he quickens the soul thereby which was born dead in sin. In a word, souls are brought into a state of salvation, not by a rational, scriptural, and spiritual faith on the gospel, but by a miracle-working power, deposited with the priest and dispensed by his sacramental forms. And the deposition of that power by the apostle-bishop is precisely a case like that of the communication of tongues and powers by the apostles' hands in the book of Acts.

This last point, we repeat, is imperfectly apprehended, even

by many intelligent opponents of prelacy. They do not grasp here exactly what prelacy means. One cause of this imperfect apprehension is, that they see these same prelatists claiming these instances of the imposition of hands as precedents for their "sacrament of confirmation," or, as the Episcopalians have it, "rite of confirmation." It seems unlikely to our friends that prelatists should be guilty of the inconsistency of claiming the same set of cases for two different uses. We reply, first, that if they appreciated the nature of prelatistical logic more justly, it would not appear to them at all strange that prelatists should use the same cases in two inconsistent ways. But second, from the prelatists' point of view, if once its error be assumed, the inconsistency is less than at first thought appears. According to them, only a bishop, an actual apostle, can ordain a priest, and he only can confirm a convert. When the first apostles conferred *χαρίσματα* of spiritual powers by the laying on of hands, those powers were numerous, and varied with the different needs of the recipients. Some received tongues, some the powers of healing, some prophecy, some casting out demons. So when the apostle (bishop) ordains some, and confirms others, he bestows different supernatural powers. To the one he gives the power of regenerating infants with water and of making a mass; to the other the power of resisting the flesh and the devil. But, in either case, it is a *χάρισμα* through the apostolic hands; a supernatural endowment through the tactual means. This is the common point of union for these parts of their scheme.

In dismissing this point, we may remark, once for all, that if our view of these impositions of hands be sustained, then all scriptural ground for the rite of confirmation will be as completely removed as for prelatist orders and sacramental grace.

Another source of defective apprehension concerning the real nature of the prelatist scheme, is the studied intermixture which they make of their real doctrine with certain scriptural truths concerning gracious qualifications for the pastoral office. They so mingle the scriptural and the superstitious as to throw dust into Protestant eyes and to obscure certain plain distinctions. True, the two schemes of a ministerial or a sacerdotal work are incompatible; but prelatists are not troubled by logical inconsistencies. Thus, at one time, when descanting on the *χαρίσματα* bestowed in orders, they speak in the most edifying way

of the integrity of spirit, spiritual discernment, and biblical knowledge, which enter into our Protestant conception of the "aptness to teach." To us it seems that the only channels by which these things come from the Holy Ghost must be study and prayer. We can scarcely raise our Protestant minds to the height of the conception that our prelatic brethren should apprehend even these as oozing through a prelate's fingers into a priest's skull. We fail to grasp their meaning. Then, to complete the confusion of our minds and the intermixture of pastoral qualifications with supernatural, sacerdotal powers, they take us to such passages as 1 Cor. xii. 28, etc., and Rom. xii. 6. We are reminded that the apostolic, prophetic and miracle-working (*δυνάμεις*) offices are here described as "set in the church," alongside of the pastoral, the ruling, and the diaconal. They show us the *χαρίσματα κυβερνήσεως* side by side with the *χαρίσματα ιαμάτων*. They intimate to us that as the latter endowment must have been bestowed through the supernatural power of an apostle, so the former, so familiarly associated with it, must have been also. And thus they would have us jump to the prelatical conclusion that the pastoral qualification in our day, as well as the first age, is conferred by the tactual succession.

The trick here is obvious to a little reflection. It consists in assuming that the *χάρισμα* was a specific thing always, namely, some endowment of spiritual power conferred by imposition of the apostles' hands, and distinct always from those "graces of the Holy Spirit" which characterize the saint, whether layman or clergyman, as a believer. But in fact, the word *χάρισμα*, in the usage of the New Testament, is general, almost as general as its congener, *χάρις*. The common idea of both words is that of gratuity, bestowing without price. The only difference between them is, that while *χάρις* denotes the generous and disinterested affection in God (or his child), *χάρισμα* signifies something bestowed, the expression of that affection. The latter word is still a general one. In Rom. v. 15, 16, justification through Christ is called a *χάρισμα*. In Rom. vi. 23, eternal life is called *χάρισμα*. In Rom. xi. 29, electing love is called *χάρισμα*. In 1 Cor. i. 7, utterance and knowledge are spoken of as *χαρίσματα*. In 1 Cor. vii. 7, Christian continence is called a *χάρισμα*. 1 Cor. xiii. plainly implies that, in the light of the last verse of the preceding chapter, faith, hope and charity are *χαρίσματα*. Thus,

anything with which God endues a Christian out of his unbought kindness is, in this sense, a *χάρισμα*. The word is, beyond doubt, used a few times to describe those supernatural endowments, and so is the word *ἐωρεά*, as in Acts viii. 20. When, therefore, qualifications for pastoral or diaconal service are called by the apostles *χαρίσματα*, by that term alone *nothing is taught as to the channel* of their bestowal; all that is taught is that they have their source in the grace of Christ. To find whether they are attained in any "sacrament of holy orders" or not, we must look elsewhere in the Scriptures.

Making these obvious discriminations, then, we remove the dust from our eyes. We are able to disembarass the matter of this question, Whence the pastoral qualifications? whose reality in true ministers and elders we all admit. We separate the question, whether ordination by the modern prelatie bishop confers any power to work sacramental grace. And we detect the hollowness of that claim by tracing it to its *genesis* in a sheer misconception of the apostolic history.

II. We are thus led to the second department of our discussion, for which the way has designedly been prepared. We have repeatedly stated the postulate in the first branch, that the instances of the apostles' conferring supernatural *χαρίσματα* by laying on their hands have nothing whatever to do with the substance of ordination to ordinary church offices. It remains now to establish that postulate. We have shown that prelacy is compelled to assume the opposite as one of the foundation stones of its theory, so that when our position is established that theory is overthrown.

Other lines of argument against it have been successfully followed. The claim of an "apostolic succession," in the sense of sacramental grace, is utterly demolished by proving that *there are no apostles* in the world; that there have been none since the death of the apostle John, as in the nature of the case it is impossible there should be. The apostolic office proper was necessarily temporary, because it could only be filled by men who enjoyed the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; who possessed the gift of working palpable miracles; who had "seen the Lord Christ;" who had "compained with the eleven all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up

from them, and so could be a witness with them of his resurrection."

This figment of "apostolic succession" is destroyed again by showing that the thing has no existence on earth to which they claim to succeed. When we ask the early prelatie church, the Latin, the Greek, and the Anglican Catholic: *To what* have your prelates succeeded? The universal answer is: "To priesthood and sacrifice"; to the mediating functions of a hierarchy. The succession is that, or it is nothing. But since Christ's ascension there is neither priest nor sacrifice on earth. The true apostles were not priests in the prelatie sense, and had no atoning sacrifice. There is no altar nor priest on earth. This line of refutation has been pursued by Dr. Thomas E. Peck, among others,¹ with irresistible perspicuity and force.

Again, the claim of apostolic succession in the Anglican Church has been historically refuted by showing this fatal chasm among almost a score of others: that during the reigns of Elizabeth and her successors, the succession was filled by the crown, and not by the episcopate. And the persons wearing the crown were rebels against the Lord Jesus Christ, living in open sin; if not infidels, friends rather of popery than of the church of Christ, and uniformly filling the succession on grounds of choice not spiritual or Christian, but wholly secular and usually wicked and selfish. The pretended election of a bishop by his Chapter was under a *Conge d'elire*, which contained the single name for which the electors were compelled to vote by the vague but urgent terrors of the statute of "*Premunire*." The consecration which followed by the hands of three prelates appointed in the same anti-Christian manner was obviously, as the pretended "creation of a bishop," a farce too hollow to impose on any sane mind. Hildebrand, the great bulwark of Middle Age prelacy, utterly refused to recognize the validity of such a farce when attempted by the Emperor of Germany.

Again, the scheme of sacramental grace is refuted by the doctrine of the gospel in the Old Testament. If the two Testaments contain the same covenant of grace, then salvation under both must be substantially by the same means and agencies. For then the two Testaments contain the same religion and the same salvation. But that this is so is evinced by these among

¹ In *The Southern Presbyterian Review* of July, 1872.

other facts. Both Testaments have the same Mediator. Both suspend salvation practically upon faith on him. Both promise precisely the same redemption from the same evils. The very ordinances which distinguish the Old Testament from the New foreshadowed the gospel truths, more clearly taught in the latter. But under the Old Testament no sacrament saved souls *ex opere operato*. There was no regeneration by circumcision parallel to the pretended baptismal regeneration of prelacy; but if the Jew became a "breaker of the law his circumcision was made uncircumcision, and he was a Jew who was one inwardly, and circumcision was that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." "All those fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them; and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. . . . Now these things *were our examples*." Then no salvation by sacramental grace is promised to us in the New Testament. "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth [upon this prelatic foundation], take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. x.) "Abraham's faith was imputed to him not in circumcision but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." Such was the meaning of an Old Testament sacrament. But he is still the exemplar to us "who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham." (Rom. iv. 11, 12). To him therefore who understands aright the relation between the Old Testament and the New, prelacy is impossible.

But our purpose is to pass hastily over these more familiar topics of refutation, and to establish the correct view touching these *χαρίσματα* conferred by the apostles' hands, which prelacy endeavors unwarrantably to press into its service. We do this because they are less understood, and the doctrine of them needs explication, even to many Protestant minds.

We hold, then, that Christ by his Spirit bestowed these supernatural powers on his apostles and certain others for a temporary purpose. That purpose cannot be more accurately stated than in the language of Paul (1 Cor. xiv. 22): "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that

believe not." Compare Mark xvi. 15-18: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. . . . And *these signs shall follow them that believe*: in my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues," etc. (See also 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 19; Acts. iv. 29, 30; v. 12; Heb. ii. 4.) The fact of the resurrection is the corner-stone of the whole gospel promise. But the credence of an unbelieving world to that most surprising event was to be gained by the testimony of the apostles as eye-witnesses. The world was invited to commit its immortal interests to the "say-so" of twelve men, who were but *ιδιώται*, and even unlearned and obscure in the main, asserting a most extraordinary fact! Manifestly, when they first stood up before an unprepared and unbelieving world, it was absolutely essential that God should sustain their credibility by some supernatural attestations. He did this accordingly by enabling them, from the day of Pentecost onward, to exhibit manifestations of divine power, palpable to the senses and of undisputable force. The legitimate effect on men's reason was seen in the conversion of the three thousand.

But twelve men could not preach everywhere. Therefore it was desirable that others should be endued with the power of exhibiting these divine "signs." Notice now the consistency and wisdom of the divine plan here. If any human agency was employed to communicate to others than the twelve these powers, that agency was the twelve themselves, and they were appointed to do it by an obvious, visible action. To this agree the best expositors, ancient and modern, including the prelate. This, indeed, is their ground for restraining all ordaining and confirming acts to their bishops, whom they deem apostles. And the reason why the power of working "signs" was derived by others only from the twelve was, that *they were the appointed witnesses to the resurrection whose testimony needed support*, and received support from the signs. Thus, through Peter's agency, the power of speaking with new tongues came to the family of Cornelius. (Acts x. 44.) Let us represent to ourselves a young child of the centurion exercising indisputably before us this supernatural gift. It demonstrates the fact that God has here intervened. But for what? That boy is no competent eye-witness to the resurrection! But he can say that it was through Peter's agency he was enabled to exhibit this sign, and Peter is

one of those eye-witnesses. Thus the endowment of the boy reflects back its evidence upon Peter the witness, whose credibility is all-important to the propagation of the gospel. Again, let us suppose the young evangelist Timothy endued with this *χάρισμα* by the laying on of Paul's hands, going forth to a heathen village to proclaim the resurrection of Christ and to exhibit his "signs." The question immediately arises, To what does this divine attestation bear relation? Timothy answers, To Christ's resurrection. But was Timothy an authentic eye-witness of the fact? No; he does not pretend to be. But he can testify that it was Paul who bestowed this power of working "signs," and Paul claimed to have actually seen the Lord in glory after his resurrection. Thus, in a word, it was best that the ability of others to exhibit the "signs" should visibly proceed from the twelve, because it was to *sustain the testimony of the twelve* that the "signs" were needed.

But the necessity was temporary. By the time that the last of the apostles and their converts had passed off the stage of life the attitude of the new dispensation before the world was greatly changed. The civilized world was now dotted over with churches. See, for instance, Rom. xv. 19. The canon of Scripture was complete. The effects of the gospel in the renewal and sanctification of souls were now visible to every nation. When at first the twelve unknown men stood up before a world all unbelieving to claim belief for the astounding fact, a miraculous support of their credibility was absolutely needed. Without it the credence of mankind could not have been reasonably or justly claimed. But now this species of support to the great central facts was no longer necessary. The world now had, in place of the few original eye-witnesses, a countless multitude of witnesses at second hand, but still honest witnesses. It had the historical attestations of the recent past to a multitude of miracles, the authenticity of all of which could not be impugned. Mankind now had the completed Scriptures, with all their self-evidencing light, and the witness of the Spirit in the called. And above all, they had the divine results of the gospel in paganism overthrown and souls sanctified under their own inspection—a kind of evidence whose stream has widened and deepened to our day. The same necessity for supernatural "signs" now no longer existed, and God, who is never wasteful in his expedients,

withdrew them. Henceforward the church was to conquer the belief of the world by its example and teachings alone, energized by the illumination of the Holy Ghost.

Finally, miracles, if they became ordinary, would cease to be miracles, and would be referred by men to customary law.

The good sense of both Chrysostom and Augustine led them in some places to teach this view of the matter with remarkable distinctness, although they both, in other places, inconsistently assert the validity of post-apostolic and even contemporary miracles.

Chrys., in Acts, Vol. III., 65: "On this account, *χαρίσματα* were given at the beginning even to the unworthy, for the early church had need of this support for the sake of (sustaining) faith. But now these *χαρίσματα* are not bestowed even on the worthy." Hom. in Cor.: "The fact that signs do not occur now is no proof at all that they did not occur then, because then they were necessary and now they are not." Aug. De Vera Relig., c. 47: "For since the Catholic Church is spread and founded through the whole globe, those miracles have not been allowed to continue to our times, lest the mind should continually demand something visible, and mankind, who, when the miracles were novelties, were all on fire about them, should become callous by means of their customariness."

Such being the purpose of these peculiar *χαρίσματα*, it was reasonable that there should be no regular connection whatever between them and the ministry as an office. They might, in many cases be connected with that office, and in many other cases they might be bestowed upon laymen, as in 1 Cor. xiv. 5, or on a child, as in Acts x. 44, or on women, as in Acts xxi. 9. They might even be exercised by an ungodly man (see 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2), and yet might have their effect as signs. But neither child, nor female, nor unrenewed man, was allowed to hold any episcopal or presbyterial office known to the New Testament. (See 1 Tim. iii. 6; ii. 12; iii. 9.) Hence it is manifest that the imposition of hands, conferring these *χαρίσματα* of signs, could not have been ordination.

The general evidence in favor of this position will be seen to be in its consistency with the whole history of the apostolic church and the teachings of its founders. When the scheme is viewed dispassionately in this light, it will appear satisfying in

its coherency. Another general evidence in its favor is, that it gives a satisfactory and consistent solution to the vexed question, when and how miracles ceased out of the primitive church. That all these supernatural signs would vanish while the church was still on earth was clearly predicted by Paul: "Whether prophecies, they shall fail" (not fail of fulfilment, but the power of uttering them by divine warrant was to be withdrawn, *καταργηθῆναι*); "whether tongues, they shall cease." But *how long* they endured after the apostles' death is still greatly debated. Rome claims, from her prelatial false premises, that the church still enjoys these *χαρίσματα* of miracles. The intelligent reader is familiar with her "lying wonders," even in this day. And Rome is herein far more consistent than the high Anglican prelatist. If the bishops are literal apostles, holding their very office by succession; if ordination is still that very *χειροθεσία* to convey supernatural powers; if the sacramental performances of the priest are, every one of them, exercises of that very power, and every baptism and "sacrifice of the altar" is literally the exertion of the very same *χάρισμα* by which men who had received this *χειροθεσία* of old spake with tongues and healed diseases, which is precisely their theory; if the very work of the priest for his charge is to make the sacramental application of the ghostly powers of redemption to their souls by his personal power of *χάρισμα* instead of being the rational, didactic minister of their effectual calling by the word and Spirit; then this same priest ought to be expected, from time to time, to exhibit this other fruit of his *χάρισμα*—MIRACLES. The man who has the supernatural power to quicken the dead soul of an infant with water, any hour of the day, and to make a divine sacrifice out of a piece of bread every Sunday and saint's day, ought to be expected to show us the easier miracles of an inspired prediction, and a Tartar or Chinese sermon, and a case of paralysis cured by his word, at least now and then. Why does he not? It would be very satisfactory! And the apostle who is able by the touch of his fingers to manufacture us one of those stupendous miracle-workers every time he "consecrates a priest," ought to be able to endow us a few holy virgins, like Philip's four daughters, to speak with tongues. Why is he so prodigal of the former species of manufacture and so stingy of the latter? We stubborn Protestants are greatly in need of some such "signs"

to establish our faith in the prelatic gospel. Why do not the Anglican Catholics give us some, like the French popish clergy? for somehow the *δυνάμεις* wrought by the ritualists at "the font and the altar" with water and bread and wine seem not to be convincing. The children that are "now regenerated" do not remain regenerate long enough for us to find it out, but go on, from the first, to exhibit the same waywardness, innate love of lies, carnality, and devotion to "the world, the flesh and the devil," with our unfortunate little ones who are aliens from the ritualistic Israel; and if the former ever become Christians they have to be converted in precisely the same Protestant fashion—"by the foolishness of preaching." The prelatic communicants, who feed on the "real presence" at "the altar," thus literally eating and drinking spiritual life, as they would have us believe, go so straight from "the altar" back to "dead works" in so many cases, that our eyes are not quick enough to see the change, and we remain skeptical about the "altar's" working any *δυνάμεις* for them. And we have to ascribe the piety of the many pious ritualists rather to that *modicum* of "the foolishness of preaching" which they still get in spite of the altar. Thus the papists who stand to their error consistently, by giving us all the kinds of *δυνάμεις* still, are much wiser than the "Anglican Catholics."

But another embarrassment is about the reputed miracles of the third and fourth centuries. The "Fathers" gravely detail them in great numbers. The great Augustine, in his sermons on the martyr Stephen, for instance, relates some wonderful things wrought at his tomb. Ambrose was a stout assertor of miracles wrought by his Milan relics. The learned Jerome was a devout believer in the miracles of his hero, the monk Anthony. What to do with these stories occasioned in the last century a stout debate in the Anglican Church. Dr. Conyers Middleton was rather inclined to treat them all as so much "gammon." The famous Bishop Warburton and the Dodwells, on the other hand, argued that Middleton's spirit, if consistently indulged, would equally impugn the apostolic miracles themselves. For, said they, if the authentic Fathers may not be admitted as sufficient, though uninspired, testimony to historical events occurring not long before their day in their own country, it will be hard to show on what plea greater authenticity is to be claimed for Mark and Luke. The best solution of this difficulty is suggested

by our account of these *χαρίσματα* of supernatural powers. If the twelve could confer them, and nobody else, then they would continue to the end of the second generation of Christians. The apostle John might have conferred them on some favored young convert in the ninth or tenth decade after the Christian era, for to the latter date this apostle lived. The recipient might have lived, like the aged Polycarp, far into the second century; so that until that time the occurrence of a genuine *σημεῖον* in the church was possible. But the Christians of that and the next generations, with much of the ignorance and some of the superstition of their recent paganism cleaving to them, were doubtless very tenacious of this splendid endowment of the churches just before them. We see traces of this in 1 Cor. xiv. Hence they would naturally close their eyes to the unwelcome fact that this gift of power was dying out. They would catch at anything which wore the appearance of it. They would find here a most alluring field for the exercise of the art of pious frauds which the church was even then learning. Hence the state of opinion and assertion which we have exhibited—the abler men avowing in their better moods that the power was gone, because no longer needed, and the weaker men still passionately asserting its continuance, and persuading themselves that they found instances of it in every startling occurrence—is precisely what we are to expect on our hypothesis. This difficulty may be further explained by the ambiguity of the words employed by the Fathers. The term miracle had probably not then received its exact definition. *Miracula* meant, by its etymology, “something to be astonished at.” In this sense the magnetic telegraph, the Great Eastern, the *Credit Mobilier* at Washington, and the fortunes of “Beast Butler” and “Boss Tweed,” are *miracula*. It is most likely that Augustine intentionally used it in this sense, of striking religious events, and that his great mind did not claim in them the perfect supernatural demonstration which we claim for a strict technical miracle, but only that strong probability of the divine, providential superintendence which every devout mind sees in rare and impressive concurrences. Again, the patristic mind, ardent and indiscriminating, often rushed to the conclusion that a certain event could only be caused by strictly supernatural intervention, which we would account for as an infrequent but natural concurrence of providences. Such may

have been the "miracle" of the Thundering Legion, in the days of M. Antoninus, if it is authentic at all.

But we have more positive arguments to support our theory of these *χαρίσματα*. One will be an examination of a number of Scripture passages, which will, as we claim, be successfully shown to maintain it. Others will be drawn from principles recognized in the Scriptures.

These peculiar gifts began for the new dispensation with Pentecost. Let us take the apostle Peter as an example of the Twelve, and examine the relation of the endowment to his Christian experience. Luke tells us (ch. xxii. 62) of one instance of Peter's repentance which our Saviour in John xxi. 18, evidently sanctioned as evangelical and genuine. For when he affectionately replied to Peter's solemn protestation, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee;" "Feed my sheep"—we have the assurance that Peter was then a new-born man. Now, repentance and holy love are fruits of the Spirit. No sinner has them until he has the work of the Spirit in him. Yet there was another sense in which the Spirit was not yet received by Peter. For this same Saviour, on the very day of his ascension, says to Peter along with the others: "Wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." And in verse 8: "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." In one sense Peter had already been "baptized with the Holy Ghost." In one sense that Agent had already "come upon him," and he had "received His power," otherwise he would have been no saint. It must then be in the other sense that he was still to wait for it. And what that was is clearly disclosed in ch. ii. 4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost *and began to speak with tongues.*" There was therefore one kind of spiritual influence which *made sinners Christians*, which wrought effectual calling, faith, repentance, love, and obedience. There was another kind clearly distinguished from it, and here called the power of the Holy Ghost, which made men *sign-workers* who were already Christians, or which, if it found them unrenewed, left them so. The latter was the power especially bestowed at Pentecost.

Which, now, of these two species of power does the church of

Christ profess instrumentally to dispense to sinners? Which do sinners now need? All answer: that kind which, of sinners, makes them Christians indeed. The terms of the dispensation of the other species, then, have nothing direct to do with those ordinances by which the church proposes to save souls; it is another matter.

We now proceed to another illustration of this truth. When the multitude at Pentecost was amazed at the supernatural signs wrought, Peter explained: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," etc. . . . "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii. 16, 18, and 32, 33.) The apostle's argument is as follows: Your prophet Joel has given you a visible mark by which God will signalize "the last days," or the latter dispensation of his kingdom. That mark was to be the powerful effusion of supernatural signs, just such as are now exhibited before you. Your Scriptures also predicted that your Messiah should be distinguished by rising from the dead. These two signatures of the new dispensation, pointing to Jesus as that Messiah, precisely concur here and now. For, we attest the fact that he arose and ascended to his Father; and as for the other sign, the supernatural prophesyings and tongues, you can hear for yourselves and see for yourselves. The conclusion is, that your Messiah is come, and the latter dispensation of the kingdom has come, claiming your allegiance.

The demonstration as put by Peter was perfect. But the reader must observe that to make it hold he must interpret the prediction of Joel, "God will pour out his Spirit on all flesh," as Peter does of the power which made men *sign-workers*. For in the other sense, of the power which makes men Christians, *the outpouring of God's Spirit is not the peculiar mark of the new dispensation*. The Spirit performed his converting and sanctifying office-work throughout the old dispensation. He who doubts this may examine Gen. vi. 3, Psalm li. 11, 12, Is. xxxii. 15, Zech. iv. 6. Moreover, the silent, gentle, gradual operation of sanctifying grace, while ultimately presenting a powerful evi-

dence under the rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them," could not constitute such a *σημείον* as would fix the new epoch of the church by an outward, palpable, definite, temporal mark. Nor would the pouring out of this influence of conversion and sanctification on "all flesh," *i. e.* on Gentiles and Jews, and on many of all nations alike, present such a mark. This also is probably involved in the blessed promise of Joel, but it is not this which answers Peter's purpose of fixing the epoch of the new dispensation by a something which spectators could "now see and hear." We are thus compelled by another line of argument to discriminate this "power of the Holy Ghost" from that which the church undertakes to minister for the conversion and sanctification of sinners.

The hearers are by Peter's sermon cut to the heart by conviction, and cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" In Acts ii. 38 we have the apostle's reply, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." See the exact correspondence of the latter part of this promise with our Saviour's in Mark xvi. 17. The previous verse had said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Compare Peter's "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.") "And these *σημεία* shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils," etc. (Compare Peter's "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;" *i. e.*, the gift of working those *σημεία*.) Here repentance (*μετάνοια*) is the prerequisite of baptism. In Mark xvi. 16, and Acts viii. 12, we learn that faith is a prerequisite for it. The gift of the Holy Ghost is here mentioned as consequent on baptism. Now, we are taught in both Testaments that faith and repentance are the fruits of the Holy Spirit. No man exercises them sincerely until the Spirit of God has been given to him to enlighten and quicken his dead soul. Hence, when the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost is here spoken of as a consequence of repentance, the apostle evidently has in mind some other phase of that gift than that which converts and sanctifies. What is this? Obviously the same phase whose miraculous effects had filled the hearers with amazement. We may justly explain the apostle's promise thus: The penitent and believing sinner professing a saving faith by the act of baptism, shall receive first, that

which is his prime need, reconciliation with God. But the Scriptures of the Jews themselves had just taught the hearers that these supernatural powers the apostles then displayed were the very signatures of that blessing and of its new dispensation. Now, saith he, embrace this gospel with penitent faith, and you shall receive the prime blessing of redemption, and in addition shall share with us these miraculous "signs" which are given to attest it infallibly.

This meaning Peter confirms in the 39th verse: "For the promise is unto you," etc. What promise? Obviously the one cited from Joel, to which their attention had been so recently and strongly pointed. But, as we have seen, this promise specifically indicated these *χαρίσματα* of supernatural signs.

This passage, therefore, correctly understood, contains no intimation of baptismal regeneration. The prelatists who so often quote it as a proof-text for their baptismal grace wholly miss the mark. Of these adults this text requires evangelical repentance as a prerequisite; and no man repents save he who already enjoys the regenerating and saving grace of the Spirit. And that species of spiritual power which is promised as the consequence of a saving change, of baptism, and of forgiveness, is the temporary kind exhibited by the inspired twelve at Pentecost.

The next clear teaching concerning this influence is at the appointment of the seven deacons, (Acts vi.) As has been remarked, no *χάρισμα* of tongues or miracles is required among the permanent qualifications of deacons in 1 Tim. iii. But as the juncture was critical, the office now newly instituted, and the church in its incipency very liberally adorned with these extraordinary gifts, the apostles deem it well to make the first selection from among men who possessed them in addition to the regular qualifications of wisdom and good character. Hence they were to be also men "full of the Holy Ghost." This undoubtedly means in this place possessed of the extraordinary gifts. It is explained in vi. 8, and viii. 6 and 13. Stephen, one of the seven "full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." Philip, another one of them, did "miracles and signs." But it is certain, against Chrysostom and later prelatists and papists, that ordination to the deaconship by the apostles *did not confer these miraculous powers* upon Stephen and Philip. They were, as we have seen, possessed

before. Their previous possession was the very qualification by which the people were guided to vote for them. That supposition of Chrysostom, that at any rate they had not exercised them before, is untenable, because when the question is of the possession of this kind of gift it can only be known by its visible exercise. All that the apostles do is to confer the diaconal office upon those whom the people select. And the exercise of supernatural powers is not among the duties of that office which is expressly defined as "serving tables." Stephen and Philip, then, both wrought signs and preached, not in virtue of their diaconal ordination, but in virtue of their previous endowment with those *χαρίσματα*, at some time and by some means not recorded; and the prelatists may not even surmise that unknown juncture to have been some previous "sacrament of orders," because the deaconship was the lowest order then existing in the church.

The next passage illustrating the subject is Acts viii. 15, etc. This proves two points. The twelve alone could confer the supernatural powers. Philip could exercise them in his own person, but he could not confer them. Notwithstanding his splendid success in winning souls and founding a church, it was necessary to send to Jerusalem and secure the presence of two of the original twelve in person to gain for any Samaritan the honor of this gift. So Simon Magus clearly perceives in the 18th verse. The other inference drawn from this instance is that this gift was distinct from that work of the Holy Ghost which makes men true Christians. These Samaritans had "received the word of God." They were "believers." They were full of spiritual joy. They were fit for adult baptism. Yet they still lacked this gift of the Holy Ghost. But the sinner who "receives the word," "believes," rejoices in Christ Jesus, already has the saving powers of the Spirit in him. And finally, when Simon Magus was detected as not a true believer, Peter does not recommend to him the attainment of this *χάρισμα* as the remedy for his wretched case, but repentance and prayer.

The next instance requiring our attention is that of Saul of Tarsus, Acts ix. 17. He had been awakened partially, even in the midst of his controversial bitterness, by the powerful demonstrations of truth in the discourses of the martyr Stephen. He had been thoroughly convicted by the appearance of the Messiah on the way. The converting Spirit had employed the

truth thus carried home to his mind to bow him in sincere repentance. The renewal of his soul was unmistakably expressed in the words, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and in the prayer which now occupied his hours. It was after his effectual calling that the pious Ananias, probably one of the earliest evangelists among the disciples at Damascus, came to him by the special commission of God, "and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul," thus recognizing by the fraternal title that he was already reconciled to Christ, "the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." The Lord distinctly informs Ananias (verse 15) why it was desirable that Saul should be filled with these powers, "for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." In this arduous mission Paul would need the support of miraculous signs, if any man could. We pursue here the same line of argument to prove that this endowment of the Spirit was not the converting and sanctifying, but the miracle-working influence. The former he had already; that alone was able to awaken him, to convict him, to convert the rebel into a submissive servant, to make him a child of prayer, to make him a "brother" of the saints, to fit him for adult baptism. The ceremony used by Ananias points the same way—"putting on his hands." Thus far we have seen this form used but for three things: ordaining to office, conferring the gift of working miracles, and the exercise of this power by one enjoying it in a particular act of healing. Galatians, i. 1. shows us that Ananias certainly did not ordain Paul to his office of apostle. Neither did he confer the power of working miracles, not being himself an apostle. For what then did he lay hands on Paul? Simply to heal his blindness (vs. 12.) The apostolic endowment which Paul afterwards exercised, not of doing this or that miracle, but of conferring the miracle-working power on others by imposition of hands, he assures us he received through no human channel. Ananias' visit was only instrumental in procuring for Paul the miraculous gift in so far as it supplied the ordinary preliminary baptism. Some probability is also found in the accompanying work, the opening of Saul's eyes. This was no doubt an extraordinary cure wrought by God, through the good Ananias. It therefore

concurs with the belief, that the filling with the Spirit which attended it was also extraordinary.

The next case is even more plain. In Acts xix. 2, the apostle Paul for the first time came to Ephesus. That it was his first visit is plain from Acts xvi. 6, and it seems plain that none of the twelve had yet been there. But the eloquent Apollos, and the good Priscilla and Aquila, had been there, and their labors had resulted in the beginning of a church. The apostle Paul found this little band unadorned by any *χαρίσματα* of miracles. This led him to ask, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" And they said unto him, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what, then, were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." Paul explained to them that John's, while an evangelical, was yet a preliminary and prospective baptism, and administered Christian baptism proper. "And when Paul had" (then) "laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them and they spake with tongues and prophesied," (verse 6.)

It is absolutely impossible to explain this singular history in any other sense than the one we advocate. Shall we say that these twelve men were now ordained to be clergymen? This is preposterous. One does not see cases where *all* the males in a Christian community are ordained presbyters or "priests," and that the first day they received Christian baptism. Shall we say that they now, for the first time, received the sanctifying and saving influences of the Holy Ghost? for that the gift they now received was a novel one, is beyond all doubt. But these men were the pupils of the eloquent Apollos, who came from Alexandria, the focus of Hebrew learning, who was mighty in the Old Testament Scriptures, who had adopted the doctrines of John the Baptist, and recognized his mission as divine. Such a teacher had taught them "diligently," and yet they were ignorant even of the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling and sanctification! Is the Old Testament, then, such a stranger to that great and blessed truth? This is absurd. When these men said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," we must understand them as intending, We have not so much as heard anything of those *χαρίσματα* of miracles. You are the first apostle we have ever

seen. We are a little band in the bosom of a great pagan city, one of the very centres of superstition. We have had no privileges of communion with other more favored Christians. The only knowledge of the new dispensation we have, is such as our revered teacher, Apollos, has been enabled to give us from the predictions and promises of his Old Testament Scriptures, and from what he was able to hear in Alexandria of the great forerunner, John, and his preaching and baptism. Until recently this pair of humble mechanics from Rome told us a few things more. So that, so far from possessing any of these supernatural attestations, we never witnessed any of them; we know nothing of them. We only trust in God's written word, and endeavor to walk in the grace of his promises while we wait for more light. This view of their meaning is confirmed again by their profession of John's baptism. This was a baptism unto true repentance. Is it not the doctrine of the Old Testament as much as the New, that only the Holy Ghost produces true repentance? They are recognized as disciples or professed believers. But it is equally the doctrine of both Testaments that true faith is the implantation of the Holy Ghost. As soon as the apostle learned that they had only received John's baptism, the cause of their having no miraculous signs among them was clear to his mind. That peculiar gift of the Holy Spirit was *subsequent* to John's whole mission, as John himself knew. "There cometh one *after me* who shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire," saith he. But if it had been a question of the illuminating and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, their lack of it would have found no explanation in their having received John's baptism, for those influences were implied in John's baptism as they inspired his preaching. Those influences had been shed upon the saints of all ages before John, from Enoch and Noah, through David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, to the latest prophets. The preparation for John's baptism, then, should have made them acquainted with the ordinary saving work of God's Spirit. But when we apply the question of Paul to his supernatural influences in working "signs," we see that the nature of their baptism is the sufficient explanation of their answer, because the church was not fully endowed in that way until Christ's baptism was instituted.

Our view is confirmed, finally, by the result. After these men

had received Christian baptism, Paul laid his hands upon them with the purpose of bestowing the gifts in question, and "they spake with tongues and prophesied." The narrative plainly implies that this was just what the apostle designed. He wished, it may be presumed, to strengthen the faith of the little band struggling with all the might of Greek paganism by these visible attestations. He was the first of the twelve who had visited Ephesus. He was about to publish his testimony as an eye witness to his risen Lord. He was about to begin a series of labors in Ephesus, to be continued two years and three months. (See 1 Cor. xvi. 9.) "A great and effectual door was opened to him there, and there were many adversaries." It was every way desirable that the cause of truth should be armed with these incontestable signs, and that connected immediately with his person, so that in the coming debates with unbelief every Christian might point to these miraculous energies, proceeding, notably, from Paul's person, and say: "There God sets his seal to the testimony of his servant."

In the Epistle to the Romans, written before Paul, and as we believe, before any other apostle had ever visited the imperial city, he begins by declaring his eagerness to see them in person. In ch. i. 11, he says: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift to the end ye may be established." It is every way probable that this spiritual gift was the power of miracles. One of the twelve only could impart it, by the laying on of hands. None of them had yet visited the infant church of Rome. Thus far they had contended against Judaism and Paganism only by the powers of argument and example. Could an apostle reach them, and clothe even a few of their members with the miracle-working energies, not only would their faith in the testimony to the great Christian facts which thus far they had reposed in witnesses far from them, unseen and unknown by face unto them, be greatly established, but the infant church would attract far more notice and be a more powerful witness for Christ in that grand centre of empire and population.

The next passage which seems clearly to treat of this subject is 1 Cor., chaps. xii. to xiv. The discussion of the *χαρίσματα πνευματικά* here is so extended and explicit that the necessity of comment is almost superseded. For the same reasons which we

have just applied to Ephesus and Rome, the infant church in the important metropolis of Corinth had also been liberally supplied with supernatural endowments while Paul was with them. But he had learned (chap. i. 11) that in his absence they had been abused. Each possessor of a given *χάρισμα*, fascinated by its splendor, and by the pleasure of exerting it, was exalting his particular power as the chief one and depreciating those of his brethren. Hence the church was threatened with parties and strifes. It is to meet this evil that the apostle enters into a detailed explanation of the nature and objects of these gifts. The main truths he inculcates are these: While there are diversities of gifts, the same Spirit gives them all. None is given for the aggrandizement of its subject, but all for the good of the common body. Hence all should be exercised in their respective places harmoniously and concurrently, even as the several grades of the ministry should be. Of these supernatural gifts, tongues, though a more startling and splendid endowment, were less useful than prophecy, inasmuch as the former could but excite attention and convict the unsanctified reason. The most splendid of these supernatural gifts were inferior to the graces of true sanctification, and indeed, without them, worthless to the possessor. It was entirely possible for an unrenewed soul, heir of perdition, to receive these miraculous endowments, so that their enjoyment was no sufficient evidence of a state of salvation. And all of them were destined to vanish from the church at no remote day, their purpose having been attained, leaving the graces of spiritual life and sanctification, "faith, hope, love," as inwrought by the Spirit through the truth, to be thenceforward the only abiding gifts of the Holy Ghost to Christ's church. Finally, the apostle's discussion implies beyond all dispute that the *χαρίσματα* of supernatural powers in that church were the endowment, not of their clergymen alone, but also of the lay members. Thus we have in this important passage all the points confirmed by which we separate these gifts from ordination and clerical qualifications.

The two parallel passages remain to be noticed in the Epistles to Timothy. In 1 Tim. iv. 14, the apostle enjoins on the young evangelist: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." In the 2 Ep., i. 6: "Wherefore I put thee in remem-

brance that thou stir up (kindle up) the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." Of these two texts, Rome and her imitators among the ritualists endeavor to make pillars for their favorite doctrine of ordination-grace. Here, argue they, ordination certainly *confers* a grace of the Holy Spirit. For, say they, when we put the two texts together, we clearly learn, first, that it is Timothy's ordination which is here alluded to, and it is as clearly said that it imparted a gift of God. One has even said that this imposition of the apostle's hands imparted all Timothy's qualifications for the work of the ministry.

One insuperable difficulty offers itself to the prelatic view at first sight. If the texts describe only an ordination to ministerial office and refer to the same event, then it was a presbyterial ordination. It is as clear that the eldership laid on hands as that Paul did. And this is fatal to the prelatic scheme. The Anglican church seeks to evade this difficulty by allowing three presbyters to join the bishop, as a kind of sub-assessors, in ordaining a "priest." If ordination is a sacrament in which the apostle-bishop, and he alone, imparts the qualification for the priestly work by infusing a *χάρισμα* of miracle-working energies, then this usage is thoroughly inconsistent. If ordination is a joint, ruling act of presbyters, in which the diocesan acts as merely a presbyter-president among presbyters, then the usage is most consistent. But the prelatic theory is surrendered and our debate at an end. But to return. If the two verses do not describe the same act, then the proof that *ordination imparts gifts* of the Holy Ghost is gone. Such gifts were imparted to Timothy, but it may have been the other transaction which imparted them. Between the horns of this dilemma we hold the prelatist inexorably. If nothing but ordination is here described, then it was Presbyterian ordination. If something else than ordination is described, then the spiritual gift may have been imparted by that something else.

The latter is evidently the correct alternative. Paul here stimulates the conscience of Timothy by recalling two transactions which probably occurred at or near the same time. One was his ordination to office, which office he received at the hands of his brother presbyters. The other was his endowment with some supernatural gift to fit him further for the missionary work, which he received from the apostle's own hands. This gift

he received *διὰ προφητείας* through prophecy. Doubtless the explanation of this may be found in Acts xiii. 1, 2, where the Holy Ghost moving in the hearts of the prophets and teachers at Antioch as a spirit of prophecy, said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." In like manner some prophet, either Paul himself, or possibly Silas, (see Acts xv. 32), "who was a prophet also himself," and was with the apostle when Timothy was called to the missionary work (Acts xv. 40), received the prophetic injunction that the young disciple of Lystra should be ordained, and clothed also with the power of working signs. Of this transaction we have the history in Acts xvi. 2, 3: "Timothy was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters, for they knew all that his father was a Greek," *i. e.*, a pagan. Henceforth we find Timothy accompanying Paul, Silas, and Luke, in the missionary work in "Phrygia, the region of Galatia," and Macedonia. Although the ordination and the imparting of the *χάρισμα*, are not mentioned in the two verses recited, we can scarcely doubt that it then took place. We read in Acts xiv. 23, that the churches of Derbe, Iconium, and Lystra had been for some time furnished with ordained elders. We can hardly err in supposing that "the presbytery" which ordained Timothy an evangelist was composed of presbyters from "Lystra and Iconium," with perhaps Silas and Paul himself (who could say with Peter, "which also am an elder"), as assessors.

Whether the imposition of Paul's hands *conferred* on Timothy his ministerial qualifications, as the prelatists would have it, or whether his presbyterial ordination proceeded upon his previous possession of the natural and gracious qualifications, as we believe, may now be decided. The brief record in Acts mentions as a ground of Timothy's selection as missionary-companion for Paul, that "he was well reported of by the brethren which were at Lystra and Iconium." Unless Luke intended us to understand that Timothy enjoyed a deserved reputation with them for qualities fitting him for this ministry, his statement seems aimless and unaccountable. Timothy was recognized as having these qualities before his ordination, and his appointment was grounded on this fact. Again, Paul, in 2 Tim. iii. 14-17, (com-

pare also, ch i. 5), evidently refers much of Timothy's ministerial qualification to the work of the pious Lois and Eunice, his grandmother and mother, and to the study of the Old Testament Scriptures. The apostle then proceeds to exalt the value and sufficiency of those inspired Scriptures, and declares that by their study alone, the man of God, the minister or herakl of the gospel, "may be *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" We are not ignorant that some prelatie expositors would have us take the phrase "man of God," in the sense of "believer," "servant of God," in order to obliterate this damaging argument. But we can show that their rendering is wrong. Neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer employs this phrase at all, except in the two places in the Epistles to Timothy: the one under discussion, and 1 Tim. vi. 11. But it is a very common title in the Old Testament, and there it means some distinguished church officer, commissioned prophet or theocratic king. Who can doubt that Paul had this usage in his eye when he called this pious and glorious evangelist "man of God?" Again, the apostle has his own phrases for denominating believers, which he uses so currently and accurately that we are never in uncertainty about them in any other epistles. The established phrases in Paul's mouth for a "believer" are πιστός, πιστός ἄνθρωπος, ἀδελφός, or ἄγος; never once ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ. What violence to the apostle's meaning, then, is committed, when this peculiar phrase is here reduced to the meaning of simple "believer!" Again, in 1 Tim. vi. 11, the apostle's scope shows very clearly that he designed by the phrase, "O man of God," to address Timothy as a church officer for a particular purpose. In cautioning him against complicity with the corruptions prevailing among some church members at Ephesus, Paul aims to bring the considerations drawn from a clerical appointment and profession to bear upon his conscience. He intimates that while avarice and its attendant evils are bad enough in a private Christian, they are far more heinous in a "man of God," an ordained leader and teacher of God's host, who ought to be an "ensample to the flock," and that a blameless and zealous Christian warfare is more obligatory on him than on others, as a clergyman. The "man of God," then, in 2 Tim. iii. 17, is a preacher of the gospel, we are willing to say an evangelist. But if prelatists will have it that Timothy was a diocesan bishop,

so much the worse for them, for the apostle here declares that the inspired Scriptures are able to make such a preacher "*qualified and thoroughly equipped*" (ἀρτίως καὶ ἐξοπλισμένος) unto ALL good works" incumbent on his office without any ordination graces imparted from a prelate's hands. Of course the apostle here has in view the ordinary duties of the minister's office in the stated condition of the church; not the extraordinary energies of the miracle-worker in the ages of inspiration, for these he had found it desirable to convey to Timothy by the putting on of his hands, after all the latter's scriptural and gracious qualifications had been acquired. If they insist on making Timothy a diocesan bishop, then they only get the damaging declaration, that even the prelate gets all needful qualification for all *his* work without any "holy orders," by the faithful, believing study of the Scriptures!

After this simple and obvious review of the history of Timothy's case, the meaning of the apostle in the two verses referring to his ordination is easy. Timothy had been inducted into the ministerial office by the laying on of the hands of a presbytery, which transaction proceeded on their knowledge of his ministerial qualifications previously possessed. But in connection with that act the apostle had also, by the imposition of his own hands, imparted to him some χάρισμα, (most probably of prophesying), which an apostle alone could give, and which was given on suitable occasions to laymen, women, ministers, or even to children, because Timothy would be thereby better fitted for convincing skeptical pagans, among whom he was to labor. It is worthy of notice, that when Paul (1 Tim. iv. 14) mentions the imposition of the hands of the presbytery in connection with this χάρισμα to Timothy, he does not attribute to them any *agency* in it, but only an accompanying presence. It is μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου; but in 2 Tim. i. 6, it is ὡς τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν μου. In the latter place, the apostle omits all reference to Timothy's presbyterial ordination, and speaking of his χάρισμα of inspiration, assumes to himself all the human agency in conferring it.

We have thus gone over all the clear instances of these χαρίσματα in the New Testament history. The result has been a complete discrimination between them and the power of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling and sanctification on the one hand,

and ordination on the other hand. These gifts were not the former, because a man might have them in eminent degree, and yet be so utterly devoid of grace as to be "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal," because they were in many cases yet to be enjoyed, or even heard of, by true believers already effectually called and sanctified. These gifts were not ordination, because we have seen them fall on laymen, women, and children, as well as unrenewed men, because a presbytery can ordain, according to Scripture, while only an apostle could bestow these powers; and as soon as the original twelve were gone, the influence died out of the world with the next generation, despite the passionate longing of misguided Christians to display them still. The irresistible conclusion is, that they were peculiar powers of exhibiting miraculous "signs," temporarily given to some professed Christians for the sole purpose of supporting and reinforcing the testimony of the twelve to the cardinal Christian facts by divine attestation until their witnessing work was completed.

This conclusion is exceedingly profitable and instructive in many directions. It teaches us, first, that the sight of a physical work of supernatural power, however stupendous, is not the immediate instrument of true conversion. Men are truly born again only by the instrumentality of the Word. (1 Peter, i. 23.) We expose here a superstition very current among the ignorant. Thus, the nominal Christian negroes, and many ignorant white Christians, believe that Saul of Tarsus was converted by *the vision* on the road to Damascus, whereas, he was converted by gospel truth, and the vision had no nearer connection with the saving work than to establish intellectual conviction of the truth. Had not the Holy Spirit applied that gospel to his soul in the rational, enlightening, renewing work of effectual calling, Saul's godless heart would never have been made one whit better by all the terrors of ten thousand visions and voices, or of the rising dead and opening hell. This is obvious enough to the intelligent reader. But it is instructive to note the close affinity between this Bœotian superstition and the theory of your ritualist, who considers his company the aristocracy of the religious world. He also expects men to be renewed by a *χάρις* of *power* instead of a work of rational illumination through the truth. He makes the same confusion between the physical

δύναμις and saving grace. Whereas, the apostle teaches us that all the former does is to make way for the saving truth, by attracting the attention and convincing the understanding. "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not." Here again the self-destructive inconsistency of the prelatic system is displayed. They say that their canonical sacraments impart a χάρισμα of saving grace; such a one, viz., as the "priest" receives from the laying on of the apostles' hands. But Paul says, the utility of such *χαρίσματα* is only for the unconverted.

Second: The discussion is valuable to refute a cardinal error of the sect of Alexander Campbell. This heresiarch taught, in the interests of his thoroughly Pelagian scheme, that no agency of the Holy Ghost whatever is concerned in the sinner's believing and conversion. But the Scriptures assert so clearly that there is an office-work of the Spirit that he dared not wholly deny it. Hence, his expedient is to say that this work begins after, and only after, baptism and conversion. Now, the texts he quotes are precisely such as we have explained. But when we show that the spiritual gifts which were once the occasional sequel of conversion and baptism were temporary *χαρίσματα* of miracles, his whole argument explodes.

It remains to add the general arguments establishing the other branch of the conclusion, that these *χαρίσματα* are entirely distinct from ordination. The sacramentarian theory is, that they are *conferred* in the ordaining act when the bishop (apostle) lays on his hands. The Protestant and Bible theory is, that ordination, which is a presbyterial and not a ghostly act, only *recognizes* ministerial qualification inwrought by Christ's Spirit, and confers nothing but office-title. Now, we demonstrate our theory by these two arguments: First, The Holy Spirit, legislating by Paul for the ordinary and stated times of the church, has expressly given two lists of the qualifications requisite for all orders of clergy: bishops or pastors, "elders that rule well," and deacons, in 1 Tim. iii., and in Titus, i. So, in Acts xx., he has given to the bishops of Ephesus a detailed injunction as to their official duties. So Christ has left, in the "letters to the seven churches," a number of items of duty and qualification enjoined on their "angels." *But in none of these is any power of working "signs" or power of sacramental grace*

required of them. We hear of sincere piety, gravity and virtue in example, fidelity in oversight, and aptness to teach, or didactic ability, but we hear not a word of any gift of *χαρίσματα* derived or transmitted through apostolic hands.

The *second* argument is, that all the clergymen of the primitive church were undoubtedly chosen by election of the brethren. The apostles fixed this precedent, even for deacons, in the very outset, in Acts vi. The usage of electing all presbyters and bishops prevailed, and the right was claimed by the brotherhood universally, in the ages next the apostles, and every one well-informed in church history knows through what a long train of usurpations and resistances the usage which now prevails in prelatic churches was finally reached. Now, it was to guide the brotherhood in bestowing their votes that the apostle describes the qualifications requisite in a bishop, elder, or deacon, so accurately and completely. But these qualifications must be pre-existent in order to justify the casting of the votes to their possessor. Hence, indisputably, they are not *conferred* by the ordaining rite which follows and is predicated on the election. Some attempt to evade this by pleading that these lists of qualifications given us in the pastoral epistles do not contain all the endowments and qualities of the acting clergyman, but only those which constitute a suitable state of reciprocity for the gifts to be bestowed in "holy orders" by the bishop's hands. This evasion will not answer. The apostle in giving the list of qualifications says expressly: "*A bishop, then, must be blameless;*" not "*a candidate for the bishopric.*" He thus shows that these are the qualifications and gifts the man will exercise after his ordination, in his actual ministry. And again, in all the descriptions and inculcations of the episcopal, or pastoral work, relating to the stated condition of the church and her ministers, there is no whisper of any possession or exercise of any other endowments by ordained men.

We have now gone over the whole teachings of the New Testament on this question of the minister's endowments. We have drawn a clear line of demarcation between those gifts or powers of the Holy Ghost which enabled some men in the Apostolic church to work miraculous signs, and the ministerial gifts and powers of the scriptural clergyman. Removing the prelatic mistakes and errors touching the former, we have not left one

line or word of Scripture to support the theory of factual succession and sacramental grace. It stands a mere dream-castle, with no basis except the corruptions of the uninspired and decadent ages of Christendom, the strength of blind and erroneous prescription, and the superabounding assertions of its advocates.

The writer experienced for some time a certain difficulty in realizing to himself the full destructiveness to prelacy of the line of criticism along which he has now attempted to lead the reader. It is to be expected that the latter also will feel something of the same difficulty. This will be, not because the criticism is in any point inconclusive, but because it will appear almost incredible that a great and permanent party in Christendom, and especially that a party in a certain sense evangelical, like the High Church Episcopal, should really hold a theory which is obnoxious to so easy a refutation, and which is, to the thoroughly Protestant mind, so intrinsically absurd. Another, and a more seemly-looking cause of the same difficulty, is in the pious confusions which so-called Protestant prelatists have introduced into the subject. No better example of this need be sought than parts of the Anglican liturgy, the wretched patchwork of churchmen, overruled by the most deceitful, unscrupulous and truth-hating politician who ever sat upon the throne of England, acting from motives always purely secular, and often wicked. The doctrine of the Anglican forms—not the Articles—touching “holy orders” is a medley of inconsistencies. Ordination is not a “sacrament,” as Rome holds; and yet, as Rome holds, it confers an invisible grace by a visible sign, which is the very essence of a sacrament. The bishop is authorized to say to the “priest” on whom he lays his hands, “Receive thou the Holy Ghost,” etc., and yet the bishop has a little before required the candidate to profess that he has already experienced the powers of that Spirit, qualifying him for, and moving him unto, the office. The ritual professes to arm the priest with ghostly powers to regenerate the infant in baptism, and tells him and the parents in the most solemn form of prayer to God, that He “hath regenerated *this infant* with the Holy Spirit.” But as soon as he has come to years of understanding, this same “priest,” now a pastor, is sent forth to preach to him as a sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, the excellent doctrines of the

"Articles and Homilies," exhorting him to receive the application of redemption through that effectual calling whose theory is utterly incompatible with that of sacramental grace.

Protestant prelatists, again, obscure the real nature of their theory of sacramental grace, by seeming to concede that the age of miracles is past, and that they claim for their "priests," on whom the bishop has conferred the grace of holy orders, no gift of tongues, or healing, or casting out demons. But they do claim for him a gift of conferring sacramental graces, which is another thing than that ministerial instrumentality which the Protestant pastor claims to exert in inculcating the truths which the Holy Ghost uses as his rational means for working grace. We ask the prelatist: Is this all you claim to do for souls? Do you, in this thing, put yourself into our class? He stoutly refuses, and he asserts that he can communicate a something which we cannot, who do not boast his tactual succession from the apostles, namely, sacramental grace. But the Scriptures discriminate the efficacious influences of the Holy Ghost into only two classes: his sanctifying influences through the truth, and his direct, supernatural, physical *δυνάμεις*, through a miracle-worker. If sacramental grace is not the one, it must be the other. Besides, if their sacramental grace is apprehensible at all, it can only be apprehended as the sort of thing which the *χάρισμα* was, a power exerted *ex opere operato*, and not merely through the rational means of truth understood and embraced. There is a more crucial question: Why this rigid, inexorable requirement of a tactual succession? Why will not a correct doctrinal succession from the apostles, like that claimed by Irenæus, answer the pastor's purpose? The true answer is, that this power of working sacramental grace claims to be the *χάρισμα* of miracles, the thing, and the only thing, which, in the New Testament, could be received only from the laying on of the apostles' hands. Finally, we have seen the *genesis* of the theory in the doctrine of Rome, which is avowedly and explicitly built upon her claim of possessing the same miraculous *χαρίσματα*, and all of them, which the apostles wielded. The daughter is of the same species with the mother. We have also quoted some of the more perspicacious and candid prelatists, as Hammond, expressly avowing the mistaken claim and basing it upon the Roman position.

It is true, that the Protestant and prelatie conceptions of the application of redemption are incompatible. The one excludes the other. The ultramontane papist is the only consistent assertor of sacramental grace. And this is the explanation of the characteristics of the Protestant-prelatie logic, with its sophisms, pious confusions, and *non-sequiturs*. Those men cannot be expected to build better who condemn themselves to the task of combining the clay with the iron, the gold and the brass.

WALNUT STREET CHURCH DECISION IN THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT.¹

THE Walnut Street or Third Presbyterian Church of Louisville, Kentucky, dates from 1842. In the spring of 1861 it had the Rev. Mr. McElroy as stated supply, Messrs. Watson, Gault, and Avery as elders, and a board of trustees elected biennially by the congregation, who, by a law of Kentucky, were a corporation to hold their house of worship. The attempts of the General Assembly, Old School, to legislate abolition and centralizing politics into Christ's kingdom, by a usurped spiritual authority, of course produced many divisions in this border church. Messrs. McElroy, Watson and Gault, with half of the congregation, sympathized with the invaded spiritual rights of the people; Mr. Avery and the rest with the aggressive party. These divisions at length drew the attention of Synod, which, in January, 1866, visited the church by a committee, which called a meeting of the congregation to choose a new stated supply and elect new elders. Messrs. Watson and Gault, a majority of the session, caused that body to resist this call as irregular, and at the bidding of the session, whom the Kentucky law of incorporation clothed with that power, the trustees closed the house against the meeting. The ground on which they declared the whole action invalid was, that the Synod had no original jurisdiction, and was therefore usurping the functions of the session and congregation. When the Assembly of 1866 meddled in the matter, the session resisted their order on the same ground. They were sustained in both positions by the Court of Appeals of Kentucky. But a part of the people organized a meeting

¹ An article in *The Southern Presbyterian Review* for January, 1878, reviewing: 1. *Wallace's Reports*, Vol. XIII., pp. 650, 8vo. 2. *Presbyterian Church Case*, Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia. 3. *McMillan vs. The Free Church of Scotland*, Court of Session, 1859. 4. *Opinion of the Supreme Court of Appeals of Kentucky on the Walnut Street Church Case*. Kentucky Reports, 1868. 5. *Argument of Mr. Bullitt, Counsel for Watson and others, before Supreme Court of Kentucky*.

upon the side-walk, and went through the form of installing three new elders. These, admitting the eldership of Messrs. Watson and Gault, gave the radical party a clear majority in the session. But Messrs. Watson and Gault, with a majority of the trustees, refused to recognize the newly elected as real elders. These began a suit in the Louisville Chancery Court, presided over by a radical judge, for the possession of the house. This court, in May, 1867, made a decision, recognizing both parties as valid elders, and placing the house in the hands of the marshal of the court as receiver, with orders to obey the session, in the use of the building, as dominated by the radical majority of [so-called] elders.

Meantime the famous "Declaration and Testimony" had appeared; and Louisville Presbytery, with Messrs. Watson, Gault and McElroy, adhered to it. The Old School Assembly of 1866 had passed its notorious "*ipso facto* act," dissolving every court, and virtually deposing every officer who dared to exercise his constitutional right of protest. The Louisville Presbytery and Kentucky Synod had resisted in the only way possible for free-men, by declaring this ruthless act void, for its utter unconstitutionality; and they had, first accepting that separate attitude forced on them by the Assembly, at last united themselves with the General Assembly of the Southern Church, in May, 1868. But the other party in the Walnut Street Church, availing themselves of the "*ipso facto* act," which pronounced the adhering members to be the church, to the exclusion of the others, claimed to be the rightful and sole successors to the property, and cleaved to the seceding Presbytery of Louisville and to the Northern Assembly. Thus the legal question became one between two rival congregations, and no longer between two parties in one congregation.

Meantime Messrs. Watson, Gault, and their friends, appealed to the Court of Appeals, or Supreme Court of Kentucky. This tribunal dealt with the case as between two parties in one church. It only decided that the street meeting of January, 1866, had been non-Presbyterian and void, so that the original session, of which Messrs. Watson and Gault were the majority, was the true session, and so entitled, by civil law, to control the trustees and the house. In reaching this decision, the Supreme Court of Kentucky entertained the questions whether the radical proceed-

ings in the congregation and in the Assembly of 1866 were consistent with the Presbyterian constitution, and it claimed the right and necessity to adjudicate those questions, so far as they touched the civil rights of members in ecclesiastical property. The radical party attempted to embarrass the decision by an injunction from the Circuit Court, but this was finally dissolved by the Supreme Court, in September, 1868, and the house remained in the hands of the court's receiver, to be used for the lawful purposes of the congregation, under the direction of the original session.

But in July, 1868, the radical party prompted three members of the church to sue, as citizens of Indiana, in the District Court of the United States. These were a Mrs. Lee and a Mr. Jones and wife. The last two were impoverished members of the Walnut Street Church, residing ordinarily and naturally in Louisville, whom that party removed to the village of Jeffersonville, just across the river, and subsisted at a boarding-house there during the short time needed, according to the laws of Indiana, to establish a claim of citizenship. In order to make it surer that the Federal court would interfere with a case still pending in a State court, these poor old people were made to swear, in their bill, that the elders and trustees of the Walnut Street Church refused all legal steps in Kentucky courts to protect the rights of them, the plaintiffs, in the property. This part of their bill the new elders and trustees also admitted on oath. Yet the records of the State courts at the time proved the allegation false.

The Southern party being speedily defeated, of course, before this Federal tribunal, and forbidden to have any share or use in the property, appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States. The case was argued in Washington, the Chief-Justice not sitting, in December, 1871. T. W. Bullitt, Esq., of Kentucky, appeared for the appellants, the Southern party, and Messrs. B. H. Bristow and J. M. Harlan for the defendants. The reporter of the Supreme Court gives the argument of Mr. Bullitt, as exhibiting the one side, and the opinion of the court, drawn by Mr. Justice Miller, adverse to the appellants, as exhibiting the other. The arguments of Messrs. Bristow and Harlan are wholly omitted. But it is well remembered that while the counsel for the appellants discussed the law of the case with a judicial dig-

nity, learning and cogency worthy of its gravity and of the august tribunal, one at least of his opponents descended to the lowest attempts to prejudice the appellants' cause, by ridicule and partisan charges of political disaffection.

The appellants, through their counsel, made two main points. The first was that the Federal courts had no jurisdiction, because the same case was still pending in a State court, which, according to the constitution and laws, was related to the Federal courts, not as an inferior, but a coördinate tribunal. Both the equity and courtesy, always practiced hitherto, forbade a Federal court to intrude into a cause still under adjudication in a coördinate tribunal of another (the State) sovereignty. This point was overruled by the majority of the Supreme Court on the plea that the cause as appealed, while substantially the same with, was now, in form, somewhat different from the one before the Supreme Court of Kentucky. On this point Justices Davis and Clifford filed their dissenting opinion, supported by an argument. They then, consistently for them, declined to go into any discussion of the questions of ecclesiastical law brought up. Hence this decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, which has introduced so momentous a revolution in our laws, goes forth unsupported by the sanction of the Chief-Justice and of these two learned associates. Our object is no farther concerned with the first point than to note it as another among the many instances, since 1865, in which Federal tribunals are engrossing new powers to themselves from the States.

The second point of the appeal raised the main question, with which alone we are now concerned. The appellants held, in accordance with the Supreme Court of Kentucky, that in this country church and state are wholly independent of each other, and the civil law guaranteed to all absolute freedom of religious opinion and of religious action, so far as it does not infringe the law or the civil right of any fellow-citizen. That consequently no civil tribunal has any right to touch spiritual doctrines or rights as such; that the proper sphere of these civil tribunals is to protect and adjudicate all civil and secular rights, among which are, of course, all rights of property, real and personal; that while all citizens are, of course, free to unite in any species of combinations they please, and for any objects not contrary to law, they cannot, by the mere artifice of such voluntary combi-

nation, exclude a lawful civil tribunal from its proper jurisdiction over persons or property; that while all citizens have the inalienable right to combine in any spiritual or religious societies they may sovereignly please, for ends not contrary to law, yet such ecclesiastical societies are known and related to the civil tribunals, just as any other voluntary association for purposes of industrial enterprise, charity, art or amusement; that the constitution which such ecclesiastical society may please to elect for itself is of the nature of a voluntary mutual compact as between its members, just as in the case of any industrial copartnership or art union; that hence, if a member of such ecclesiastical society use his right as a citizen of resorting to a secular tribunal to protect his secular right in and under such association, while such secular right is the only thing the civil tribunal may adjudicate, yet, in adjudicating that right, it may, and often must, claim the prerogative of considering the ecclesiastical constitution which obtains between the litigants and the question whether it is infringed; because this ecclesiastical constitution being the voluntary compact by which these parties have covenanted to regulate such secular rights between each other, the civil tribunal has no other means of exercising its legitimate jurisdiction over the secular rights in question, than to consider for itself the question of the parties' observance or non-observance of their own ecclesiastical compact. But the court's jurisdiction over such question reaches only to the secular rights of a party in the premises, and may not be extended to meddle with his spiritual rights, duties or opinions. This, the established doctrine of the British courts, and the prevalent one of American courts, was overruled by the majority of the Supreme Court of the United States. Their ruling is thus accurately summed up in the words of their reporter:

"5. Controversies in the civil courts, concerning property-rights of religious societies, are generally to be decided by a reference to one or more of three propositions:

"(1.) Was the property or fund which is in question devoted, by the express terms of the gift, grant, or sale by which it was acquired, to the support of any specific religious doctrine or belief; or was it acquired for the general use of the society, for religious purposes, with no other limitation?

"(2.) Is the society which owned it of the strictly congregational, or independent form of church government, owning no submission to any organization outside the congregation?

"(3.) Or is it one of a number of such societies, united to form a more general

body of churches, with ecclesiastical control in the general association over the members and societies of which it is composed?

"6. In the first class of cases, the court will, when necessary to protect the trust to which the property has been devoted, inquire into the religious faith or practice of the parties claiming its use or control, and will see that it shall not be diverted from that trust.

"7. If the property was acquired in the ordinary way of purchase or gift, for the use of a religious society, the court will inquire who constitute that society or its legitimate successors, and award to them the use of the property.

"8. In case of the independent order of the congregation, this is to be determined by the majority of the society, or by such organization of the society as by its own rules constitute its government.

"9. In the class of cases in which the property has been acquired in the same way by a society, which constitutes a subordinate part of a general religious organization with established tribunals for ecclesiastical government, these tribunals must decide all questions of faith, discipline, rule, custom, or ecclesiastical government.

"10. In such cases, where the right of property in the civil court is dependent on the question of doctrine, discipline, ecclesiastical law, rule, or custom, or church government, and that has been decided by the highest tribunal within the organization to which it has been carried, the civil court will accept that decision as conclusive, and be governed by it in its application to the case before it.

"11. The principles which induced a different rule in the English courts, examined and rejected as inapplicable to the relations of church and state in this country, and an examination of the American cases found to sustain the principle above stated."

The tenth paragraph contains the new construction of law, which we regard as so ominous to the liberty of Americans. To this our argument will be confined, and we shall disencumber it of all mere accessory circumstances. We wish neither to debate nor to decide the question whether the old session of the Walnut Street Church acted discreetly or piously under the circumstances. We have nothing to do with the question on which side of that quarrel the most unchristian things were said or done. Still less should the question of law be complicated with the political issues then dividing the people of Louisville, or with the passions they excited. We claim, also, that the question of law and right must not be complicated with the consideration whether it is desirable or seemly that bodies of Christians should feel themselves constrained to "go to law before the unbelievers." As individuals we may profoundly deprecate such scandals. As ecclesiastics in a spiritual court, had we a place there, we might even incline to lay on the Christian conscience of brethren the literal construction of the apostle's inhibition, "Why do ye not rather suffer the wrong?" As Christian citizens, we may exceedingly desire some safe policy which

would discourage this species of litigation. But it is not for a tribunal of law to practice such policy. That is a work which belongs to church teachers and rulers, and its happy end can be gained only by inculcating a more vital religion and purer morals on Christians. The court of justice can only adjudicate the rights committed by the laws to its protection with an impartial fidelity. When one said that a Federal court "should lean away from a given jurisdiction," because the occasion for its exercise was to be lamented, Chief-Justice Marshall replied, "*Nay, the court may have no leanings.* As it may not grasp a jurisdiction not conferred by the laws, so it may not shun that legally belonging to it."

In discussing this issue between the Supreme Court of Kentucky and that of the United States, we shall consider, first, the law of the case, and second the equity and righteousness of the principles in question.

I. In debating the state of the laws we expressly admit :

1. That the main point at issue has never been fixed by any statutory enactment in this country, either State or Federal.

2. That while many State courts have been called to adjudicate virtually the point at issue, it had not hitherto been entertained expressly by the Supreme Court of the United States.

3. That the American decisions disclose a certain amount of vacillation, which is naturally accounted for by the novelty of the question ; but the main current of the American decisions is in favor of the Supreme Court of Kentucky.

4. That in such a state of affairs a court of last resort, deciding so vital a principle for Americans, should have risen above mere technicalities, even had they been adverse, and should have been guided by the high considerations of equity and the lights of history in free Christian commonwealths, as applicable to the principles of the American State.

In arguing the law of the case, we naturally begin with the English decisions, because our equity practice, like our other institutions, is drawn from our mother country. Since we have here no church establishments like the British, we appeal to their decisions only when they regard the ecclesiastical property of their dissenting churches, for their relation to the British commonwealth is that of independence like ours. The law has been perfectly settled there by the famous case of *Craigdallie vs.*

Aikman, which went up from Scotland to the House of Lords, and was decided in 1813 by Lord Eldon, the Chancellor. (2 Bligh, 529.) The parties were members of a divided congregation in the Secession body known as the "Burgher Synod," and their case had been twice inadequately and inconsistently adjudicated in the Scotch "Court of Session" on grounds not unlike those now advanced by Justice Miller. On appeal to the House of Lords, both decisions were overruled by Lord Eldon, and the following principles were emphatically laid down by him: That property conveyed to a dissenting society in Great Britain, for purposes of religious worship, *is a trust*, which the court is to enforce for the purpose of maintaining that religious worship for which the property was devoted. And in the event of schism (supposing the deed of gift has made no provision for such case) the uses of the trust are to be enforced, not in behalf of a majority of the congregation, nor yet exclusively in behalf of the party adhering to the general body, but in favor of that part of the society adhering to and maintaining *the original principles*, to propagate which it was founded. This decision, recognized and followed in the case of the Attorney General *vs.* Pearson, 3 Merivale, 353, has been adopted in all cases of this nature in Great Britain, and usually in America.

But under this decision the question may still arise, Who shall exercise the trust in the case where the society has changed only its order, not its doctrine, or has gone into another connection? The original constitution of the church itself must decide. Who is to judge whether this constitution has been departed from? Hitherto the law has given but one answer: It is for the civil court, which is called on to protect the trust, to decide that question. In support of this may be consulted the American cases of Gibson *vs.* Armstrong, 7 B. M., 481; Sutter *vs.* The Reformed Church, 6 Wright, 503; Smith *vs.* Nelson, 18 Vermont, 566; Kniskern *vs.* Lutheran Church, 1 Sanford's Chancery, 439; and Miller *vs.* Gable, 2 Denio, 492. The Circuit Court of the United States for Kentucky has been the first to violate this well established principle of British law. This tribunal has ruled, not only that a decision of a question of doctrine or order by the supreme church court is final as to the property trust, when the constitution of the church authorizes such supreme judicatory so to decide, but that this ecclesiastical decision must be

final, even when wholly unauthorized by the church's own constitution, and when violating the real original purpose of the trust. Such is the sweeping extent of the new doctrine.

Subsequent cases in Scotland elucidate and confirm the law as established by these British decisions, even by the slight irregularities which have since occurred. The Scotch Judge, Lord Meadowbank, in the case of *Galbraith vs. Smith*, 15 Shaw, 808, in 1837, did indeed rule, that the last and highest decision of the church court must conclude. But in the next case, *Craigie vs. Marshall*, A. D. 1850, 12 Dunlop, 523, the Court of Session expressly overruled and reversed this decision as contrary to the doctrine laid down by Lord Eldon. But the most conclusive evidence in our favor, as to the state of the law in Great Britain, is the famous "Cardross Case," or *McMillan vs. The Free Church General Assembly*, decided by the Court of Session in 1859. The Rev. Mr. McMillan had been charged before his Presbytery, the Free Church Presbytery of Cardross, with immoral conduct on two counts. The Presbytery found him guilty on the second count, declaring the first not proven; and it affixed a certain ecclesiastical censure for that offence. McMillan appealed to Synod against this sentence on the second count; while his prosecutors filed no cross reference, complaint, or appeal as to the justice of the Presbytery's acquittal of him from the first count. The Synod simply affirmed the Presbytery's judgment. McMillan then appealed to the Free Church General Assembly. This body, swayed by Dr. Candlish, convicted McMillan on both counts, overruling his objection that only the count on which the lower courts had convicted him was before the Assembly by appeal, because, according to the church constitution, the Assembly is not a court of original jurisdiction over the moral conduct of a minister. McMillan then went to the supreme secular court (the Court of Session) and demanded an injunction against the publication of the Assembly's censure. That tribunal *entertained his appeal*. The Free Assembly, relying arrogantly on the claims of their famous "Protest," in which they had aimed, at the Disruption of 1843, guided by the best legal talent, as they supposed, to make sure of a complete independence of their spiritual authority from secular control, while taking the attitude of a separate dissenting body towards the state, refused to plead to the issue before the Court of Session. It has long been set-

tled that the Court of Session, the supreme tribunal of Scotland for all cases of equity and civil law, may not interfere with the criminal or judiciary courts, nor with the ecclesiastical courts of the Established Church, so long as they remain within their proper jurisdictions; for the constitution of Great Britain regards these last two courts as coördinate, and as equally clothed with their powers by the national legislature. And in the case of Paterson against the *Established* Presbytery of Dunbar, who was dismissed for drunkenness by that Presbytery, confirmed by the Established Assembly in clear violation of church forms, the Court of Session had refused Paterson all relief, holding that an Established Church court had coördinate jurisdiction with theirs so long as they did not exceed their legal scope; and that irregularity of forms in pursuing a spiritual censure did not constitute an excess of jurisdiction. The imperious abolitionist divine, Dr. Candlish, supposed that, *a fortiori*, the Free Church courts must be irresponsible to all secular tribunals. But to their profound mortification, the Court of Session ruled that, the Free Church being a voluntary and dissenting religious society, wholly unconnected with the state, its constitution, as before the civil law, could only be regarded as an optional *private contract* entered into between its members; and that, consequently, any civil court of suitable jurisdiction, when appealed to by a citizen to protect any secular right supposed to be assailed by his brother members in that society, must have the right to construe that private contract, the church constitution, so far as to protect the civil right claimed to be invaded. In this respect the independent or voluntary religious society stood on the same footing with any industrial, benevolent, or æsthetic association. Accordingly, the Court of Session affirmed the exception which McMillan had made before the Free Assembly, and decided that since the constitutional compact which the members of the Free Church had chosen to establish between themselves did not give the Assembly original jurisdiction over the Presbytery's first count against him, and it was not before them by appeal, the Assembly's attempt to issue a censure on that count was void. And that body was restrained, under the civil penalties of libel, from publishing that church censure against McMillan until they had tried him on that count according to the forms of their own church compact. See Innes's *Law of Creeds in Scotland*, which

will confirm in the most pointed way the principles claimed. So Lord Brougham, in the first Auchterarder case, 1842-'43, ruled, that "when any proceeding of a church court, however strictly ecclesiastical in its own nature, *affects a civil right*, that proceeding, in its whole extent, falls under the cognizance and control of the courts of law."¹

Such is the last decision as to the state of the law in Great Britain. We have no call to claim that the American decisions go to this length of giving an aggrieved member this civil remedy even against a spiritual censure irregularly pronounced by his church. The Illinois case of *Chase vs. Cheney*, which we shall cite in due time, may stop short of this. But this Cardross case powerfully demonstrates, and by the stronger reason, our position, that a property right existing under ecclesiastical compacts must bring those compacts under the jurisdiction of the civil court so far as that property right is concerned. The Court of Session decides it is British law, even when affecting the more shadowy right of a party as to his social repute, a matter lying more immediately beside the spiritual censures which are the church's only weapon. Then, *a fortiori*, this is law as affecting a tangible secular right in property. The mistaken hopes of the Free Church men, their reliance on their protest of absolute spiritual independence, and the whole history of the Free Church from 1843, illustrate the force of this remarkable decision.

We hold, then, that the British decisions are for us, and Mr. Justice Miller, in the adverse decision which we criticise, clearly concedes as much when he attempts to argue that they are, for special reasons, inapplicable to our country. His only hope of escaping their conclusive force is in those special reasons. Let us sum up the British law. We have shown :

1. That in Great Britain a dissenting church, as to any civil interests held in it, stands before the law precisely as does every other voluntary association for industrial, literary, æsthetic or philanthropic objects, and is subject to civil jurisdiction precisely in the same manner and to the same extent.

2. That the power of a dissenting church judicatory is derived, so far as the civil law knows it, solely from the optional compact of its members, of which the expression is the church

¹ *Buchanan's Ten Years' Conflict*, I., 427.

constitution, which they have seen fit to ordain between themselves.

3. Hence, whenever such church judicatory has exercised an ecclesiastical power modifying a secular right of its members, in accordance with their own agreed compact, their church constitution, a civil court cannot interfere, but is bound to give effect to that ecclesiastical action on secular rights of their own voluntary members, without intruding into any question of motives or ecclesiastical grounds of action. And to that extent the rights of an inferior are as inviolable as of a superior church court.

4. But when a citizen, otherwise entitled to the protection of the laws, who is a member of such dissenting or independent church, claims the aid of the civil law against a secular wrong, which, he says, emerges out of a wrong ecclesiastical act of his church, whether as to order or doctrine, the civil court must enquire whether that act is constitutionally valid or void, and in this inquiry the sole standard of judgment must be, next to the deed of gift itself, the constitution of the church.

But Mr. Justice Miller, while conceding the British law, argues that it is not fully applicable here, because in Britain certain churches, among others, are established by law. He urges that the Lord Chancellor is not only a supreme judge in civil law and equity, but also a supreme ecclesiastical judge for the Established Church of England, the dispenser of a large amount of church patronage, and the appointed avenger of certain ecclesiastical sins of heresy and blasphemy. Hence his mind would naturally be swayed to meddle too much in dissenting churches. Moreover, in Lord Eldon's time especially, dissenting churches were not free, in the sense of the American religious liberties, their members being subject to certain penal statutes for ecclesiastical actions or dogmas.

We reply, it is not enough to say that the peculiar circumstances of an Established church *might* warp the judgment of a lord chancellor; it must be shown wherein they have warped it. Again, Mr. Justice Miller has himself defined the relation of an American church to the law, precisely as the British judges did the relation of a Dissenting church to British law. It is precisely with reference to that relation that they have adjudicated the principle we claim. It cannot be made to appear that the

additional circumstance of the existence of a penal statute for heresy, or a claim for tithes, modifies the application of that principle to a property trust held under the voluntary compact between the members of that church. We assert that *quoad* such property trust in things freely bestowed on that dissenting church, at least, *it is free* in England, precisely in the sense in which an American church is free in the United States. Then the principle of the law should apply to the trust in precisely the same way. Indeed, if the points of restriction on religious liberty of dissenters which remained in England had any influence in the question, they should only make the principle apply with the more conclusive force under our American laws, because the principles on which that application was based in England, as stated in the four propositions of the previous page, apply all the more clearly under such institutions as ours.

Again, the English adjudications concerning trusts might plausibly have countenanced a certain range of license from that "doctrine of uses" technically termed "*cy-pres*," which has prevailed in the English courts. But the steady current of American law is to restrict that doctrine of uses with a rigid hand. We have wisely retrenched such judicial discretions within severe limits. For instance, where a trust declared by a testator is found void for lack of definiteness, we do not for a moment allow the judicial tribunal to exercise its discretion in inventing an interpretation of the trust, or suggesting a kindred use; rather than allow this, we invoke the express provision of the statute as upon intestate property. How should this peculiarly American principle bear on the adjudication of ecclesiastical trusts? Evidently it is in favor of our view. It requires the court to construe the trust in strictest accordance with the design of those who created it. It dictates the duty on the court of using the actual historical evidence which defines that original design in the fullest and most exact manner. Where is that evidence found? Chiefly in the church compact under which the trust originated. We claim, then, that if the British rule prevailed, notwithstanding their "doctrine of uses," still more should it prevail here, where we have repudiated that doctrine.

In America, says Justice Miller, "the law knows no heresy, . . . and is committed to the support of no dogma, the establishment of no sect." This is strictly true. And for that

very reason the duty of the court to construe and protect the trust exactly according to its original intent becomes the more stringent. Because the law is neutral to all doctrines; because the civil tribunal has no right, as such, to favor the one doctrine or the other, therefore there remains for it no other guide, in the performance of its sacred duty of protecting the existing trust, than the historical design of those who, in the exercise of their rights as freemen, saw fit to create it. And to ascertain that the only resort is to the church compact under which it was created, or else the words of the deed of gift itself.

Justice Miller also argues that, because our civil laws leave all men free to join any association they please, not illegal, "all who unite themselves to such a body do so with an implied consent to this government, and are bound to submit to it. But it would be a vain consent, and would lead to a total subversion of such religious bodies, if any one aggrieved by one of their decisions could appeal to the secular courts and have them reversed." One answer is, that our principle extends the jurisdiction of the civil court only to property rights, so that the whole spiritual and moral jurisdiction of the independent religious society is left unscathed. And the civil court, even in this low and limited sphere, employs that society's own voluntary constitutional compact as the authoritative standard. There is, then, no "subversion" of that free society's lawful ends; but only a restriction of such unlawful property wrongs as might emerge from its freedom when pushed into license. Another answer, which is perfectly conclusive as to American Presbyterians, is that they never gave an implied consent to an unlimited and irresponsible church government. It never was a part of their implied compact with each other that any ecclesiastical act of their church courts whatsoever should bind. The Presbyterian constitution is one of defined powers, and leaves to every inferior judicatory and individual member their reserved rights. The thing which they have covenanted is this: to submit to all the church judicatories when acting constitutionally. Their maxim is "*Lex rex*;" while their constitution is their king, they have never sworn allegiance to "King Majority." If this power violates their spiritual rights, they find their remedy in the exercise of the freeman's right of protest, or, in the last resort,

secession. If it infringes their secular rights, they are entitled to the protection of the civil tribunal, just as all other citizens are.

The function and right of the civil government is to protect civil rights. It claims authority over all property questions between its subjects. It is not reasonable that some subjects should withdraw a part of the property in the commonwealth absolutely beyond the jurisdiction of the civil law merely by the artifice of covenanting in some voluntary agreement of their own. The voluntary society, however religious in its professed objects, can be known to the state as concerns property only as all other associations. None of them are clothed with any validity by legislative enactment of the state. Their tribunals *are not courts*, in the eye of the civil tribunal, and with reference to those secular rights the jurisdiction of which belongs supremely, so far as this world goes, to the state, however they may be courts to the covenanted members concerning the agreed objects of the association. If one such voluntary association may, by its optional compact, extrude the commonwealth from its jurisdiction over one segment of property, all others may do the same; and we should reach this result, that the state would have to stand helpless and witness universal injustice, its hands tied by the circumstance that all the citizens had covenanted with each other to submit to the injuries of other organizations unknown to the law as to any valid power over the commonwealth's own sphere. Such would be the consistent result. But can this be law? Even in the extreme case, to which the Presbyterian Church does not pertain, where the members had covenanted to make their highest church court supreme and irresponsible in all its acts, so unwise a compact of individuals could not rob the commonwealth of its inherent jurisdiction over property rights. A church constitution thus extravagant might be quoted against the member appealing from it to convict him individually of inconsistency; it could not be quoted against the commonwealth to estop her from her inalienable right and duty of protecting the property rights of citizens, even when the sufferers have been rash and inconsistent.

We come now to the actual state of the law, as determined by the American decisions. Mr. Justice Miller cites, as against us,

many cases.¹ The reader cannot be dragged through the details of all these, nor is it necessary. While they disclose some uncertainty in the application of the correct principle—a feature easily accounted for in American courts—none of them seem to have a strict relevancy to the issue before us. We select two in order to illustrate this assertion. One of these is the South Carolina case of *Harmon vs. Dreher*, decided by the learned Chancellor Job Johnstone. Dreher was a Lutheran minister, who was tried and deposed by his Synod for certain offences and anti-Lutheran doctrines. He sued for certain rights in the use of a church property, from which his deposition ousted him. Chancellor Johnstone says, giving the opinion of the court, that by reason of the mutual independence of church and state in South Carolina “the judgments of religious associations bearing on their own members are not examinable here; and I am not to inquire whether the doctrines attributed to Mr. Dreher were held by him, or whether, if held, they were anti-Lutheran; or whether his conduct was or was not in accordance with the duty he owed to the Synod or to his denomination.” “When a civil right depends upon an ecclesiastical matter, it is the civil court, and not the ecclesiastical, which is to decide. But the civil court tries the civil right and no more, taking the ecclesiastical decisions, out of which the civil right arises, as it finds them.” The last is the proposition on which Justice Miller seems to found himself. But it is irrelevant, in that it appears Mr. Dreher prayed the court to entertain the motives and justice of the ecclesiastical sentence against him, while he did not charge that his church constitution had been violated in its forms in reaching it. He does not seem to have charged usurpation against the Lutheran constitution on his prosecutors. So that it does not appear that Chancellor Johnstone adjudicated any principle save the one we have already stated in our third proposition on page 272. But had the complainant raised the issue that the ecclesiastical decision, which implied his ousting from the Lutheran property used by him, was void because violative of the constitutional covenants of the Lutheran Church, we have

¹ *Shannon vs. Frost*, 3 B. Monro, 253; *Gibson vs. Armstrong*, 7 B. Monro, 481; *Harmon vs. Dreher*, 2 Speers' Equity, 87; *Johns Island Ch. Case*, 2 Richardson's Equity, 215; *Ferraria vs. Vasconcelles*, 23d Illinois, 456; and the recent Illinois case of *Chase vs. Cheney*. (January, 1871, Amer. Cases, Vol. XI., 95.)

no evidence that Chancellor Johnstone would have decided it with Justice Miller.

The case of *Chase vs. Cheney* (Supreme Court of Illinois, January, 1871, American Cases, Vol. XI., 95,) turns out to be on our side. The Rev. Mr. Cheney, now a diocesan of the "Reformed Episcopal Church," then a popular pastor in Chicago, had declined to obey the Romanizing orders of his diocesan, Chase, in the manner of celebrating divine worship and the sacraments. The bishop had, for this insubordination, procured his ejection from his charge and its emoluments by a trial before the usual episcopal court provided by their canons. Cheney appealed to the secular court, to retain his manse and salary, charging unfairness in the particulars of his ecclesiastical trial, and injustice in its verdict. Thornton, Justice, delivered the decision of the court against Cheney, saying:

"4. Where there is no right of property involved, except clerical office or salary, the spiritual court is the exclusive judge of its own jurisdiction."

Yet the court, while disclaiming the power to inquire into the spiritual jurisdiction for Mr. Cheney's relief, proceeds to argue the very question disclaimed. "Without asserting the power of this court in cases of this character, yet, on account of the earnest, able and elaborate argument of counsel, we will notice the objection that the spiritual court had no authority to adjudicate upon the alleged offence." But it is more material to note that the court (pp. 102 and 104 of its opinion) bases its refusal to inquire into the justice of the ecclesiastical sentence against Mr. Cheney solely on the doctrine, which the court elaborately argues, that his privilege of preaching and receiving the consequent pastoral emoluments in an episcopal parish *was not his vested right*. And it adds expressly: "The civil courts will interfere with churches or religious associations when rights of property or civil rights are involved." Thus, the Supreme Court of Illinois is found with us on the principle of our case.

But Lawrence, Chief Justice, and Sheldon, Justice, dissent even from this qualified opinion, declaring that even in the case where only clerical office and salary are involved, if a citizen pleads before the civil court that he is deposed by an ecclesiastical court "unlawfully constituted," and thereby loses emolu-

ments and support, he may come to the secular courts for protection. They say, "We concede that when a spiritual court has been once organized in conformity with the rules of the denomination of which it forms a part, and when it has jurisdiction of the parties and the subject-matter, its subsequent action in the administration of spiritual discipline will not be revised by the secular courts." Their argument is, "The association is purely voluntary; and when a person joins it he consents that, for all spiritual offences, he will be tried by a tribunal organized in conformity with the laws of the society. But *he has not consented* that he will be tried by one not so organized." We have here the British doctrine precisely as stated in our propositions 3rd and 4th, page 272

The same doctrine is lucidly taught by the New York Court, in the case of *Walker vs. Wainwright*, 16 Barbour, 486. In this case motion was made by Walker's counsel, that Wainwright, the bishop, be required to show cause why an injunction previously granted, restraining a sentence of the bishop in accordance with the verdict of an ecclesiastical court for a time, should not be made absolute. The learned judge decided:

"The only cognizance which the court will take of the case, is to inquire whether there is want of jurisdiction in the defendant (the bishop) to do the act which is sought to be restrained. I cannot consent to review the exercise of any discretion on his part, or to inquire whether his judgment, or that of the subordinate ecclesiastical tribunal, is sustained by the truth of the case. I cannot draw to myself the duty of revising their action, or of canvassing its manner or foundation, any farther than to inquire whether, according to the law of the association to which both the parties belong, they had authority to act at all. In other words, I can inquire only whether the defendant has the power to act, and not whether he is acting justly."

We may actually claim the Chancery Circuit Court of Louisville, in whose adverse decision this discussion began, as virtually conceding the law to us. For that tribunal entered fully into the question of the constitutionality, as tried by the Presbyterian Church constitution, of the doings of the Synod's committee in the Walnut Street Church in January, 1866, and of the consequent results. And the conclusion reached is deduced in part from the assumption that the Synod, according to its constitution, had the undefined powers then exercised. So that even this court has not adopted the doctrine of Mr. Justice Miller. Had it done so, its consistency would have led it, instead of entering into that discussion, to rule simply that a

spiritual court, a Synod, having spoken, the secular one had nothing to do but to give effect to its ecclesiastical decree.

But there is one American case whose relevancy is so peculiar, and whose importance was so great, that it is unpardonable to omit it in this argument, as Justice Miller has sought to do. This is the Presbyterian Church case in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, 1838, known as *Todd vs. Green et al.* The General Assembly of 1837 deemed that the "Plan of Union" with Congregationalists in New York and Ohio was corrupting the order and doctrine of the church. Under the influence of an "Old School" majority, this Assembly declared that plan null and void for unconstitutionality, revoked it, and dissolved four Synods which had grown mainly out of it. It directed all true Presbyterians within these four Synods to reorganize themselves legally as parts of the Presbyterian Church, and declared the remainder not to be, and never to have been, valid parts thereof. It was the logical sequel of these decisions that it should charge its permanent officers, in organizing a new Assembly in 1838, to drop from the roll the four Synods. In May, 1838, these officers were proceeding to organize a new Assembly in accordance with this action. When a "New School" member, whose commission was unquestioned, demanded that the names from the four Synods should now be enrolled, the moderator refused. When the member appealed from his ruling to the house, the moderator refused to put the question, on the ground that there was, as yet, no house organized enough to entertain it. Thereupon, by a preconcerted signal, the New School members, amidst much confusion, professed to depose this moderator for contumacy, to elect a successor, Dr. Fisher, and to adjourn immediately to another place. The Old School members refused to recognize this action by voting, and, on the withdrawal of the other party, proceeded to complete their organization in accordance with the acts of 1837. The New School body claimed to be the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. As soon as possible, according to the law of Pennsylvania incorporating the trustees of the General Assembly, this body elected additional trustees, whom the old board disregarded. One of these New School trustees, Mr. Todd, then brought an action against Dr. Ashbel Green and the remainder of the old board for the whole funds and estate held by them for the General Assembly, in the *Nisi Prius*

Court of Philadelphia, Judge Rogers presiding. The form of the suit was a *quo warranto*, which raised the issue whether Todd, *et al*, were trustees, and this, in turn, depended simply on the question whether the body electing him was the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America. Before the *Nisi Prius* Court Todd and his associates gained their cause, in virtue of a charge of Judge Rogers instructing the jury in their favor. The case was then carried up to the "Court in Bank," or Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, presided over by the eminent jurist, Chief-Justice Gibson, and the decision of the lower court was reversed. A new trial was ordered, under instructions and rulings so explicitly in favor of the Old School that the plaintiffs dropped proceedings. Such is the outward history of the case.

The body known now as the Northern Assembly, in whose favor Justice Miller has attempted to construct the new law, is composed by a fusion of Old School and New School. Each of these parties, for a time, rejoiced in a decision of the case in their favor, so that each of them ought to feel itself committed, so far as consistency can commit, to the upholding of the principle on which their victory was founded. But when we come to the examination of the two decisions we find that, while contrary in practical result, they were perfectly at one in proceeding upon the rule of law for which we argue. The question whether Todd and his comrades were trustees was held by both courts to turn solely upon the question whether the body electing them was the General Assembly. And both the courts ruled that this in turn depended upon the conformity of this body with, or its discrepancy from, the Constitution and Rules of Order of the Presbyterian Church. These questions were entertained by both the courts. Both took jurisdiction over and decided upon the validity or invalidity of the "Plan of Union," of its repeal in 1837, of the consequent excision of the four Synods, and of the steps taken in the organization of the two rival Assemblies; and the standard by which all were judged was the constitution of the church. They reached opposite conclusions simply by taking opposite views of these various ecclesiastical questions, over which both alike took jurisdiction so far as to ascertain the property rights. Thus the case is made all the stronger for us by the fact that both the civil tribunals which adjudicated it, while reaching opposite results, proceeded

on the very principle which Justice Miller now seeks to disclaim. And all shadow of doubt whether we misconstrue them is removed by these facts, that they not only allowed counsel the fullest debate on the point of jurisdiction from which the new decision would have precluded them, and actually adjudicated that point, but that they, in words, argue and assert the propriety and necessity of their doing so. The reader may consult the "charge" of Judge Rogers to his jury in the "Presbyterian Church Case," pages 464, 482, and the opinion of Chief-Justice Gibson, pages 587, 594. The latter eminent authority rules, page 587: The General Assembly, "having no corporate capacity in itself, is not a subject of our corrective jurisdiction, or of our scrutiny, further than to ascertain how far its organic structure may bear on the question of its personal identity or individuality." "Unfortunately, a *quorum* of the General Assembly may be constituted of a very small minority" (of the whole body), "so that two, or even more, distinct parts may have all the organs of legitimate existence. Hence where, as in this instance, the members have formed themselves into distinct bodies numerically sufficient for corporate capacity and organic action, it becomes necessary to ascertain how far either of them was formed in obedience to the conventional law of the association; *which law, for that purpose only, is to be treated as a rule of civil obligation.*" So, on page 591, the court, after arguing that the "exsecinding acts" were constitutional according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, proceeds thus: "If, then, the Synods in question were constitutionally dissolved, the Presbyteries of which they had been composed were, at least for purposes of representation, dissolved along with them." "It appears, therefore, that the commissioners from the excised Synods were not entitled to seats in the Assembly, and that their names were properly excluded from the roll."

In the argument before the Court in Bank for a new trial, the chief part was borne by Mr. Sergeant, of Philadelphia. Although, as counsel, he speaks here *ex parte*, his age, impartiality, vast learning, and high personal character gave to his views almost a judicial weight. On pages 545-'47 he expounds and asserts our doctrine thus: "What will you appeal to as a ground of argument? I say that the acts of the Assembly of 1837 were good. Why? Because I think they were right. What I think is,

however, of no consequence to anybody else. We must have some rule. What is it? Let us go to the constitution of the church." Again: "If this court can try a question as to the constitutionality of an act of the church, we must be allowed the benefit of these same principles and rules" (by which the validity of a secular law would be tested in a court). "What are they? There is one great one, he who complains is bound to show that the act is in conflict with some express provision of the constitution" (of the church). But as our principle was adopted and proceeded on by both parties, in both courts, there was little occasion to assert it in those trials.

The only apparent evasion from the force which we claim in this case would be the plea that it is exceptional, because there were two rival bodies, each claiming to be *the supreme* court of the church. The doctrine of Justice Miller is, that when the supreme church court has spoken, the civil tribunal cannot go behind it. But here two bodies, claiming to be such, have spoken; and therefore he must, in this peculiar case, go behind the *dicta* of both; and he would do it consistently with his views. But to this there is a fatal answer. The General Assembly of 1837 was the supreme court of the whole denomination, unquestioned by either party. This Assembly had spoken decisively, and there was no pretence that the Old School moderator and clerks in 1838 were not proceeding in strict accordance with its *dictum*, to organize an Old School Assembly in 1838. Hence, had Judge Rogers and Chief Justice Gibson held the doctrine of Mr. Justice Miller, consistency would have compelled them both to dismiss the suit of Todd and his comrades, on the ground that the secular tribunal was incompetent to scrutinize the supreme acts, or the logical consequences thereof, which the supreme court of the church had in 1837 deemed itself entitled to perform.

The Northern General Assembly of 1872, representing a great body constituted by the fusion of New and Old Schools, hastened with eagerness to place this new doctrine of Mr. Justice Miller on its ecclesiastical code, and to make it a part of the law of their church. Both branches have thus signalized their glaring inconsistency. The New School have now condemned the very ground on which they did their utmost, in 1838, to seize the whole estate of the Presbyterian Church in America; and the

Old School have repudiated the whole ground on which they engrossed that estate away from their New School brethren for thirty years.

We conclude this examination of the law, as revealed by the decisions, with two remarks. The utmost that can be claimed, after this review, concerning the current of the American cases, is, that it may be to some degree indecisive. Were such the case, surely it would be competent to the highest court of law in this American empire, when called to settle this great principle of law for the first time, to rise above the plodding precedents of lower tribunals, if these were found inconsistent with the true equity of the matter, and to fix the unsettled point of jurisprudence by the broad lights of that equity, as reflected from the history of free commonwealths. But we have shown that the current of the decisions is virtually on our side. We shall also claim the support of the general equity in the case.

How alien the new decision which we combat is to the law as recognized by jurists, may appear from the fact, that already two Supreme Courts of States have been constrained to dissent from it. The court of Pennsylvania, in the recent case of *Geo. H. Stuart against the Reformed (Cameronian) Church*, tacitly but distinctly disregarded the new law attempted to be set up. The court of Missouri, in a recent ecclesiastical case, did the same thing overtly, declaring that not even the veneration due to the august tribunal in Washington could prevail to force them to countenance a doctrine so illegal. The enforcement of the new rule is, indeed, impracticable, without the exercise of a tyranny and injustice in particular cases, to which the minds of the American people will not be reconciled until many years of oppression shall have elapsed.

II. We now consider the equity of the case. We maintain that when an ecclesiastical decision is set up in a civil tribunal as a ground of a civil right, this court must be competent to entertain the question, so far as the right of property goes, whether the ecclesiastical tribunal acted within its jurisdiction; and that the standard by which this question is to be decided is the ecclesiastical constitution agreed to by the members of that religious society. This almost self-evident principle of equity Mr. Justice Miller seeks to evade by saying, that the word "jurisdiction" is a vague one. Should the church court find a

sentence against any man's life or person, the civil court would, of course, set it aside; the former has exceeded its jurisdiction. So, he admits, should the church court claim to decide against one of its members a property-right not grounded in an ecclesiastical decision, this claim would be utterly disregarded in any civil court where it might be set up; for there would be a just sense in which the church court "had no jurisdiction." But Justice Miller thinks that in cases where the decision implying the property-right "is strictly and purely ecclesiastical in its character"—"a matter which concerns theological controversy, church discipline, ecclesiastical government, or the conformity of its members to the standard of morals required of them"—there the church court has exclusive jurisdiction; and whatever may be the secular injustice alleged, it is incompetent for any civil court to inquire whether or not the church court has construed its own organic law aright in assuming this jurisdiction.

But the position is inconsistent with the previous admission. Even Justice Miller limits his position to matters "strictly and purely ecclesiastical in character." But if this ecclesiastical decision invades a property-right, it is not strictly and purely ecclesiastical. The very issue which the complainant raises before the civil court to which he resorts for protection is, whether the ecclesiastical court has not exceeded its jurisdiction. That issue inevitably makes the ecclesiastical court *a party* before the civil tribunal; and how contrary to equity are all proceedings which make a party its own judge, no lawyer need be told. Let this be weighed in the mind, and it will be clear that either the justice's point must be relinquished, or the extreme ground must be taken, that all decisions, termed, by the church courts announcing them, *ecclesiastical*, must stand unquestioned, no matter how iniquitous. In truth, the difficulty concerning vagueness of jurisdiction does not exist. The civil court has no spiritual jurisdiction; the church court has none directly secular; and its indirect power of affecting civil rights by its spiritual decisions is defined by its own church constitution.

This clear and simple limit will preserve us, so far as any human institutions in imperfect hands can be expected to work with certainty, from all the confusions and intrusions which are foreshadowed in such threatening colors by the "opinion" of the Supreme Court. It is not claimed that civil tribunals are

always enlightened, and just because they are secular; but it is claimed that ecclesiastical courts are not always so because they are spiritual in profession. And we firmly hold that the principles of our civil government give the citizens the additional safeguard of an appeal from the possible injustice of the fallible church court, wherever vested civil rights are involved. We assert that, in all constitutional States, this safeguard is needed, and will usually be just and beneficial. Mr. Justice Miller's whole practical argument seems to proceed upon the assumption that secular courts, because non-religious, will usually be ignorant, unjust, or intrusive; while spiritual courts, because belonging by profession to the kingdom of heaven, will always be wise and just. Does history sustain this? It is unnecessary to remind the reader of the many instances in which apostate and usurping ecclesiastics have foully perverted their professed allegiance to the kingdom of righteousness, for perpetrating enormous wrong. But the possibility and likelihood that a pure and well-meaning clergy, if unchecked by secular authority, may violate the civil rights of their people, can be truthfully asserted without any libel on their actual character. To hold the scales of justice with an even hand, amidst all the complications of right arising in civilized society, requires not only virtue, but special knowledge, and the judicial habit of thought. We concede to the body of our American clergy the *virtue*; but they do not usually possess the other acquirements. The scenes often witnessed in their ecclesiastical courts betray much want of that forensic experience and judicial skill so necessary in adjudicating civil interests. The tendency of the clergyman's education and life is to render him over-dogmatic. He is revered by his people "for his work's sake." His customary discourse is from a *rostrum* (the pulpit) where no forensic rival can test or sift his logic. His converse with sacred and divine topics betrays him into the tendency of sanctifying his own fallible conclusions, and even his prejudices, until he is prone to resent an attack upon them as impiety.

But Mr. Justice Miller argues that each denomination of Christians has not only its theology, but its digest of church laws, which will probably be found extensive and complicated. Civil lawyers are not likely to be learned and skilful in these; the church lawyers presumably are. Hence, the doctrine he

discards makes the appeal, as he thinks, from the more learned tribunal to the one less learned. We reply, first, that the issue raised by him who is aggrieved in his civil rights in a church court never involves the whole theology and canon law of that church, but only some definite questions, the standard for the settlement of which is the brief organic law of the church itself. Surely it cannot be hard for an intelligent and impartial mind, skilled in general jurisprudence, to decide such questions. But the thing which the complainant wants is not more learned, but more impartial judges. We reply, second, that this objection only proves the want of a diligent and learned judiciary in a civilized state. The duties falling upon civil judges must often lead them beyond their special science. If this objection were allowed, it would reduce the jurisdiction of the civil courts to a narrow circle indeed. Thus, the jurist has long found himself compelled to annex extensive branches of the alien science of medicine so closely to his proper studies that it has currently received the name of "Medical Jurisprudence." The jurist may find himself constrained, in order to adjudicate a crime, or a question of inheritance, to explore the mysteries of anatomy, of surgery, of physiology, of obstetrics, of toxicology, of mental pathology. Does he invoke the chemical or medical expert as a sovereign judicial authority on these points, and humbly remit to him the absolute decision of the scientific questions raised? No; he calls him to his bar only as a witness, whose testimony is but ancillary to the judicial decision. So the judge in a maritime court, in order to decide correctly a question of insurance or salvage, may be compelled to inform himself of the details of naval architecture and of navigation. Because, unless the court furnishes itself with this knowledge, the aggrieved citizen is deprived of his right of protection under its shelter. With what consistency can the justice advance his plea from the intricacies of creeds and canons when he knows these facts? How can the jurist claim to dismiss the branches of theology and ecclesiastical law from his studies when he knows that his noble science is thus continually laying all other arts and all learning under tribute to its beneficent ends?

The reporter of the Supreme Court correctly states a part of its decision under his sixth proposition. If the property in trust was given to a Congregational church, which is independent in

its order, in case of a schism the trust is to be bestowed by the civil court on "the majority of the society." The inadequacy of this principle is disclosed by a very simple question. Suppose this independent society should be found equally divided? To which of the equal members will the court give the succession? Here, at least, it must unavoidably take jurisdiction of the question, which of the two maintains the doctrine and order which the trust was designed to uphold? But after doing this, that court could not, in the next case, abdicate the righteous authority it had just exercised, and allow the party which perverted the trust to enjoy its possession, because merely of the accident that it had the major numbers. To act thus would imply that numbers made error true and wrong right.

Under propositions 5th (1) and 6th, the court ruled that when a trust had been bestowed upon any ecclesiastical body for the expressed object of "supporting any specific religious doctrine or belief," "the court will, when necessary to protect the trust to which the property has been devoted, inquire into the religious faith or practice of the parties claiming its use or control, and will see that it shall not be diverted from that trust." Mr. Justice Miller, expounding this correct doctrine, speaks as follows :

"In the case thus made, it is the obvious duty of the court to see that the property so dedicated is not diverted from the trust which is thus attached to its use. So long as there are persons qualified within the meaning of the original dedication, and who are also willing to teach the doctrines or principles prescribed in the act of dedication; and so long as there is any one so interested in the execution of the trust as to have a standing in court, it must be that they can prevent the diversion of the fund or property to other and different uses. This is the general doctrine of courts of equity as to charities; and it seems equally applicable as to ecclesiastical matters." . . . "In such case it is not in the power of the majority of that congregation, however preponderant, by reason of a change of views on religious subjects, to carry the property so confided to them to the support of new and conflicting doctrine." . . . "Nor is the principle varied when the organization to which the trust is confided is of the second or associated form of church government. The protection which the law throws around the trust is the same. And though the task may be a delicate and difficult one, it will be the duty of the court in such cases, when the doctrine to be taught or the form of worship to be used is clearly laid down, to inquire whether the party accused of violating the trust is holding or teaching a different doctrine, or using a form of worship which is so far variant as to defeat the declared objects of the trust."

Such is the concession to which Justice Miller is constrained by the force of indisputable law and equity. But it concedes our case. For the Presbyterian Church is notoriously charac-

terized by a specific form of religious doctrine and order. Its creed is extended, particular and absolutely definite. Its government is regulated by an express constitution of defined and limited powers. Hence, any man declaring a trust for the propagation of Presbyterianism, as existing in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, must be understood by the court as having designed to "devote it to the teaching, spread or support of a specific form of religious doctrine or belief." It is also presumable that a specific church order may have had as real, although not as sacred, a value in the eyes of the donor as a specific doctrine. Therefore the court may be as much bound to protect a trust devoted to the maintenance of a given church order as that devoted to a given doctrine or worship. But since the order of the Presbyterian Church was notoriously definite and specific, every property devoted to Presbyterianism must be regarded as coming under the class of specified trusts.

Mr. Justice Miller admits fully that "religious organizations come before us in the same attitude as other associations for benevolent and charitable purposes, and their rights of property or of contract are equally under the protection of law, and the actions of their members subject to its restraints." . . . "The principles on which we are to decide so much of it (the case appealed), as is proper for our decision, are those applicable alike to all its class."

This admission again gives us our conclusion. The acknowledgment must also be extended to all voluntary combinations of citizens, not illegal, implicating property-rights. This no judge of law will deny. Nor will it be denied that property bestowed on a church for religious uses *is a trust*. Nor will the third step of our argument be denied, that wherever a trust has been created, it may become the duty of the courts to protect it, and to take whatever jurisdiction over the working of the association is necessary to that end. A mining company, for example, has a by-law enacted by its stockholders, that while six of its ten directors shall be a quorum for the transaction of ordinary business, no number less than the whole board shall sell any real estate of the company. But a sale has been made, by which a stockholder feels aggrieved. He seeks legal redress. He claims, in his bill, that the sale shall be voided, because actually made by only seven directors. Must not the court entertain

that question of fact, and, if it be established, must they not judge the pretended act by the by-laws of the association itself, and declare it void? It would be held by all a vain plea to urge that the court had no power to go back of an act of a majority of the directory, or to adjudicate a question under a by-law of a voluntary association. This principle of law is surely too incontestable to require much defence when we see it regulating a multitude of decisions, and illustrated in a standard work like Bryce's *Ultra Vires*. It is too late to question the rule that the act of an association or trustee affecting their trust, done *ultra vires*, may be declared void. But now, on what ground shall the civil court exempt an ecclesiastical association from the operation of this rule? It is confidently held that none exists in law or equity.

Indeed, the plainest principles of common justice are sufficient to make this clear. The citizen who chooses to devote his property to any person or object, not illegal, is entitled to have his wish and purpose guarded by the law. Thus the main guide for interpreting a will is the design of the testator. Let us suppose that there is written in the will, in words, a specific bequest to "John Smith." But there are actually two John Smiths. Then the court will be bound, if necessary, to exhaust every means for ascertaining which is the John Smith that was in the mind of the testator. It will take parole evidence, and inquire into any facts, as to the relations, the affections, and even the words, of the deceased man, which will throw light upon that question. If there were a spurious John Smith who had assumed the name of the legatee, still more would it be the duty of the court to scrutinize every fact necessary to establish the identity of the real John Smith. In the Walnut Street Church case there were two churches and two Presbyteries of Louisville. Upon the plain principle of law just stated the court was bound to discriminate for itself the one of the two which answered to the design of the donor of the property, and no consideration of courtesy or respect for the asserted identity of either claimant could relieve it of this duty.

A consideration of the history of that great struggle, continued through so many centuries, and moistened with so much bloodshed, by which the Protestant states of Europe acquired the boon of spiritual liberty, will teach us the true bearings of the

new doctrine concerning church trusts. We will limit our inquiries to the state from which our commonwealths sprang. The perpetual effort of Rome, in her ambitious struggle to dominate over the rights of men, was to make her ecclesiastical courts as independent of the courts of law as possible, and to grasp under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by means of churchly pretexts, as many secular rights as possible. She aimed to make all clergy amenable for secular crimes, such as robbery or murder, only to the spiritual courts. She claimed to adjudicate all cases of ecclesiastical property. Every wise statesman who ever struggled for the welfare of the British people has seen the portentous tendencies of these ecclesiastical usurpations, and has resisted them. Even the early struggles of the Norman monarch, Henry II., against Becket and Pope Alexander III., disclose, in the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, a clearer appreciation of this contest than has been exhibited in our Supreme Court. Among the sixteen heads of those wise laws which mark the beginning of the "Reformation" in England, as a movement for secular liberty, we note the first and ninth asserted by the statesmen of England, and resisted by Becket and Rome. Every controversy touching a right of advowson or ecclesiastical patronage, even when clergy were parties, was to be tried before the king's courts. Every challenge between a clerk and a layman, as to the feudal tenure of the property in dispute, whether a lay or spiritual fee, was to be tried before the king's court with a jury of laymen. If that jury decided that the fee was spiritual, the question on its merits might go to the ecclesiastical court; if they decided that it was a lay fee, it must be tried before the secular court. Our laws know neither feudal laws of tenure nor rights of patronage as forms of personal property. But we have in these contested articles substantially the principle of equity for which we argue. The adjudication of secular rights belongs exclusively to the secular courts, and the question whether a given right is ecclesiastical, as soon as it is raised, reduces the ecclesiastical court from the grade of judge to that of party, who must submit his claim to the jurisdiction of the secular court. The able lawyers who guided Henry saw clearly that on no other plan could an effectual barrier be raised against the engrossment of wealth in ghostly hands. Wealth is power. They saw that just as soon as the spiritual power was armed with

wealth, whose tenure and use were amenable to its superior jurisdiction only, there was a rival and aggressive *imperium in imperio*, whose movements must be fatal to liberty. Using their wealth irresponsibly to the secular authority, these ecclesiastical authorities never failed in the end to use it for their own aggrandizement, and the engrossing to themselves of more exorbitant powers. Such is man's nature.

We come now to the age of Blackstone, when Protestant England had become fully established as a free Christian commonwealth. In this author (Book III., Chap. VII., p. 87, etc.) we read:

"These eccentric tribunals, which are principally guided by the rules of the imperial and canon laws, as they subsist and are admitted in England, not by any right of their own, but upon bare sufferance and toleration from the municipal laws, must have recourse to the laws of that country wherein they are thus adopted, to be informed how far their jurisdiction extends, or what causes are permitted, and what forbidden, to be discussed and drawn in question before them. It matters not, therefore, what the pandects of Justinian, or the decretals of Gregory, have ordained. They are here of no more intrinsic authority than the laws of Solon and Lycurgus." . . . "In short, the common law of England is the one uniform rule to determine the jurisdiction of our courts."

Thus does the English law speak of the ecclesiastical tribunals, even of that National Church which is, by express law, established in the kingdom. These spiritual tribunals are, after all, only *courts* by sufferance of the common law, and can take no jurisdiction whatever, save what the secular law allows them. How much more true, then, in this country, where church and state are absolutely separate and independent, is that proposition which we asserted, that church courts *are not courts* by any valid force of law in their relation to the courts of law of the country. However, they may properly be spiritual courts, in their ghostly jurisdiction and moral penalties, to those persons who have voluntarily joined the religious societies they represent; in the view of the law, they are no more than voluntary umpires, and stand on the same footing with all the other extra-legal boards of direction or reference created by the optional combination of citizens. The inevitable corollary from this position is, that whenever the decisions of one of these bodies touches a property-right which the constitution and laws have committed to the guardianship of civil courts, such decisions have no validity save that which the law allows and confers.

The property of the Anglican Church was derived chiefly from

her original endowments in lands and houses and in tithes. Blackstone, in defining the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts touching this property, requires us to take the following distinction: They "have no jurisdiction to try the *right* of tithes unless between spiritual persons; but in ordinary cases between spiritual men and laymen are only to compel the payment of them when the right is not disputed." . . . "If any dispute arises whether such tithes be *due* and *accustomed*, this cannot be determined in the ecclesiastical court, but before the king's courts of the common law." (*88.) "For *fees* also, settled and acknowledged to be due to the officers of the ecclesiastical courts, a suit will lie therein; but not if the *right* of the fees is at all disputable, for then it must be decided by the common law." (*90.) So, in claims for spoliations or dilapidations of ecclesiastical real properties, "if the right of patronage" (to that property) "comes at all into dispute," . . . "then the ecclesiastical court hath no cognizance, provided the tithes sued for amount to a fourth part of the value of the living." (*91.) Here, again, the ecclesiastical power, even though regularly established by law for its own sphere, is jealously kept in subordination to the civil courts, wherever property-rights of citizens are involved in the church's spiritual actions. The same principle of law should be applied, for the stronger reason, in an American State, because here the ecclesiastical tribunal is one unrecognized by, and otherwise irresponsible to the State. In England every bishop, whose diocesan court in ordinary exercises this limited power, is appointed by the crown; as most of the inferior clergy receive their presentations from some secular order in the state. The Parliament, the representative legislature of the state, is the supreme church court. The Lord Chancellor, the supreme judge in civil law and equity, receives his appointment direct from the king; and that judge is also the judicial head of the church. The last resort, in the question most purely spiritual, is to the Privy Council. But though the subordination of the Established Church to the civil power, which is her creator, be so complete and guarded at every point, still the wise and cautious spirit of British law restricts her jurisdiction over property-rights, especially of laymen, to the mere execution of undisputed claims. How complete will be the contrast, if Justice Miller's opinion remove from our ecclesiastical courts this last band of

accountability, and leave these bodies, unknown as authoritative tribunals to the law of the land, and otherwise utterly irresponsible to it, to adjudicate property-rights at their sovereign option under the plea of their construction of their ecclesiastical constitutions!

This new departure receives a supremely ominous coloring when viewed in connection with the rapid growth of the tenures in *mortmain* in our country, and the melting away of the old restrictions against them. Our revolutionary sires understood the peril to the future purity of the Christian religion and the future liberties of the people from this source; not only were they statesmen who had learned wisdom in the study of constitutions and histories, instead of the slippery *arena* of the "*caucus*" and the political ring, but they had been taught by the bitter experience of clerical oppressions and persecutions. They knew that this ghostly and perpetual tenure of property held in *fee simple* for professed spiritual uses, if allowed its natural course, tended to engross more and more to itself. The power of the spiritual physician over the sick and dying sinner is often supreme. The sense of guilt, the desire to testify repentance in the near approach of the eternal and tremendous award of divine justice, and to propitiate his favor by gifts of that worldly wealth now slipping from the grasp, become the most influential motives. Or if the dying testator has a more enlightened conscience and ingenuous heart, no disposition of his wealth can seem more noble than the bestowing of it in perpetuity, to extend to others that gospel which has purified and consoled his own spirit. Zeal for the same holy end will not fail to enlist the most self-denying and disinterested of the clergy in recommending and applauding such bequests, while the more ambitious and greedy of the holy order will have their eagerness whetted by more ignoble motives to seek these pious gifts. Thus, the history of every Christian state shows, that if these bequests are legalized, they will be sought by the church and will be made to her. If the valves are opened the steam will flow beyond all doubt. It is flowing now in all the American States in constantly increasing volume. The churches are becoming rich with real property and endowments in various forms. But when these riches have once come, a new danger emerges to reinforce the perilous tendency. The ecclesiastical riches become the in-

evitable objects of avarice. Worldly and greedy men are drawn to seek spiritual offices for the sake of the money and power with which they are now endowed; and the general character of the clergy undergoes a revolution. Of course this new clergy, greedy, mercenary and ambitious, will not fail to wield every ghostly motive with increasing zeal, to gather in these pious bequests.

Such is the explanation of the process which at the Reformation had locked up half the real estate of Scotland and one-third of that of England, and which held one-third of that of the French, even down to the great Revolution, in the hands of undying spiritual corporations. True statesmen at once comprehended the result. They saw this tenure in *mortmain*, where unchecked by law, subtract a third or a half of the wealth of the state from taxation, thus throwing an intolerable burden of taxes on the secular orders. They saw this ill-directed wealth taint and corrupt the ministry, until, from the holy messengers of a heavenly religion, they became an order of greedy and luxurious oppressors. They saw this professedly consecrated wealth practically breed in the state a new species of aristocracy, self-perpetuating, irresponsible, and separated by caste from the people who should have been their fellow-citizens. Such was the apprehension felt on this head by those great and wise men who founded the independence of Virginia, that they concluded there was no assured safety for their children's freedom save in tearing the tenure in *mortmain*, root and branch, out of their constitution. The laws studiously and totally excluded that form of tenure; and for fifty years there was absolutely no legal recognition of real or personal property-tenure for any spiritual corporation. Every acre of land, and every building, and every endowment they possessed, was held by some *extra*-legal expedient, under which the trust was protected only by the public opinion of an honorable people and the personal conscience of trustees and their heirs-at-law. Let the reader review the history of this tenure in Europe, and he will hesitate in pronouncing even the caution of the Virginians to be extreme.

But now all is changed, and the old danger is forgotten. Our new "progressive" statesmen, ignorant or disdainful of the lessons of history, and wise only in demagogism and gain, heedlessly remove every restriction. Ecclesiastical corporations

spring up by multitudes. The church grows yearly in endowed wealth. Already its moral effects are seen. The church courts of the great denominations obviously begin to feel the arrogance of power, and their atmosphere to savor of ecclesiastical policy rather than humble ministerial devotion. The clergy no longer attracts the unwilling veneration of the world, but is either contemned or courted as the great men of the world are courted. The line of distinction between Christian morals and worldly conformity becomes more faint. And now comes the Supreme Court of the United States, and gives the last fatal impulse, by making these church courts irresponsible in the use or perversion of all the vast wealth they are destined to engross.

For every practical mind sees at a glance, that under this new ruling nothing is required of a grasping church court to render it actually irresponsible, but that it shall have the hardihood to say that *it deems* its decision conformable to the constitution of the church. Does it ever cost anything to ambitious heady men, heated by prejudice and lust of power, to say this? But they have only to say this as a supreme church court, and, according to Mr. Justice Miller, no power on earth can check their hand from the unjust grasp upon ecclesiastical property. The effect is to make each supreme court a veritable pope, so far as church property goes. Each one is clothed with the power of a practical infallibility, touching all the sacred property in its denomination, and all the property-rights of its members. This suggests a final and crucial test for Justice Miller's doctrine. Let a lay papist appeal to the law for protection in this land of freedom and equal rights, and we shall see how the new law will work. His bishop claims in his own person all the property of the church in his diocese in trust for "holy mother church." This bishop acknowledges no ecclesiastical subordination to any save the pope. He, the pope, is the supreme ecclesiastical court. But, saith our Supreme Court, the ruling of the supreme ecclesiastical tribunal of the suitor's denomination must be unquestioned and final. So, when this American citizen appears at the bar of his own country to claim justice, Mr. Justice Miller tells him that a man who is a foreigner, living four thousand miles away, who scorns all allegiance to the American government, and who claims indeed to be an independent prince of a separate

and distinct state, has forbidden him to have even a hearing! With this *reductio ad absurdissimum* we leave the case.

The least perspicacious may see the bearing of this new law upon the rights and existence of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Its consistent application would rob us of every endowment, every printing-house, church, manse, burying-ground and school, and every missionary or evangelistic fund held in the name of the church. Let us suppose that the Northern Assembly had held on its way consistently in the species of legislation which it set on foot in 1865 and 1866; that it had persisted in the declaration actually adopted, making the constitutional position of the Old School Church touching slavery and civic allegiance to be the sin of heresy; that it had judicially required all Southern Synods, Presbyteries and sessions to try and censure their members for this sin; that when these courts treated the injunction with neglect, the Assembly had proceeded to deal with them for contumacy, had dissolved them by its *fiat*, and had pronounced any minorities of negroes or "carpet-baggers," however despicable, who professed to adhere, the true Southern churches and church courts, entitled to the succession to all the records, endowments and real estate. What is all this more than was actually done by the Assembly of 1866 in its "*ipso facto* act"? Let it be remembered that to that enormous act the Supreme court has given its full sanction in the case of the Walnut Street Church, and that in virtue thereof the present occupants *actually hold that property to-day*. It is to be presumed that the Supreme Court means to be consistent. The Northern Assembly, then, has only to extend an enactment precisely identical to all our other churches, and they must expect to see their property follow the fate of the Walnut Street Church. The only tenure by which Southern Presbyterians hold the possessions, bought with Southern labor and money, bestowed by the piety of our sainted Southern ancestors, for the purpose of upholding the doctrines and principles which we still maintain, but which the Northern Assembly has in part discarded and now assails, is the optionary forbearance, or timidity, or policy of that hostile and accusing body. Does one say, "They do not dream of wielding that power?" For their own credit we hope they do not. But this solace is dashed by two thoughts. The first is, whether a free people can be content to

hold rights so clear and dear by the mere sufferance of another association? The second is the pertinent inquiry, *For what end and use* did the Northern Assembly so eagerly engross this law of tyranny in its own code, *and for what purpose is it now retained there?* To promote "fraternal relations"?

SPEECH ON FUSION WITH THE UNITED SYNOD.¹

THE argument, Mr. Moderator, before the recent adjournment, was directed to the constitutionality of the proposed act of union, and to the propriety of connecting it with any declaration of principles other than the Confession. One main point remained, the discussion of which has been sundered from the others, I fear awkwardly, by the arrival of the hour of adjournment. It has been strongly asserted that, if it were prudent to accompany this act with any declaration of principles, this one prepared by your committee would be inadmissible, because faulty in itself. To this point I will now advert.

Much has been said of the *ambiguity* of the committee's propositions. Has not the attempt been made to verify this charge by those who make it, by their over-readiness to profess that *they* misunderstand it? Upon this easy way of supporting the charge, no document on earth could escape the reproach of being ambiguous. For what one has not been *misrepresented* by some captious persons? The question is, not whether an adverse ingenuity can *profess* some misunderstanding of the committee's meaning, but whether our words can be fairly *convicted* of being liable to it. Let the same just rule be extended to these propositions which the Confession, Chap. I., Sec. IX., asserts for the interpretation of the Scriptures, and we shall have no fear of their being misunderstood.

Much has also been said about the presumption of the attempt to construct on these points "a new creed," which was "virtually to supersede the Confession; and the supposed haste and rashness with which the attempt is said to have been made, is set in contrast with the laborious years spent by the Westminster Assembly. Now, in reply to this, there are two things to be

¹ This paper forms only the concluding part of Dr. Dabney's speech, but includes all that related to the doctrinal statements adopted by the committees of conference on the question of a union with the United Synod. The first part was not reported, though it would have been gratifying had the whole been preserved as a permanent record of the argument.

said. How do these objectors know how much of labor, time, correction and study were devoted by the committee to the preparation of these few paragraphs, which only profess to touch four points of doctrine? Next, they repudiate the purpose of making a "new creed," or any thing which was "virtually to supersede the Confession." They declare that their purpose was only to put forth a few statements to evince the cordial agreement of those who were supposed to have differed on these points. And for this modest, humble, specific, temporary purpose, I will still assert these sentences may answer, not perhaps absolutely well, but sufficiently well; nor will I lie under the charge of presumption in attempting to draw up a few such statements, the doing of which is obviously within the reach of any respectable Presbyterian minister, with due care, guided, as he would be, not only by the Scriptures, but by the Confession, and by a recent and exhaustive discussion of these points between New and Old School, which, after lasting thirty years, has ceased for want of new matter. Is it not time such a subject should be understood by all well-informed men?

Now, Mr. Moderator, I might fairly avail myself of the course pursued by the opponents of this report, to claim an *a priori* conclusion in its favor. After numerous and most confident objections and criticisms, outside the house and in print, they have not attempted on this floor, save in one brief form, to substantiate a single one of them in debate. There has been a silence and avoidance of this whole branch of the discussion. I might claim this as my prosecutors' *nolle prosequi*, as their tacit surrender of their charges, and thus demand of the Assembly a verdict in our favor. But I desire to press no technical advantage. Moreover, a memorial has been read *as a part of the argument* in this discussion from the respected Presbytery of South Carolina, which raises three points against our paper. As the other side have seen fit to bring them in this form into the house, I shall avail myself of the right to reply to them, giving thereby evidence of our readiness and ability to defend the whole.

1. The memorial objects to the words that this union is intended to "remove the dishonor done to religion by former separations." And the charge is here implied, elsewhere broadly stated, that we ask the Assembly, in adopting this language, to

repudiate and condemn, in a body, the glorious reforms and principles of 1837. Mr. Moderator, when Martin Van Buren, in his inaugural, closed by saying he should "endeavor to walk in the steps of his illustrious predecessors," his enemies—of whom he had even more than he deserved, bad as he was—by chopping off the "s" made him say, "his illustrious predecessor," and they then charged him with a disgusting sycophancy, in those words, to Andrew Jackson, to whose popularity he owed his election. This innocent phrase in the report of your committee has met with the same fate. The "s" has been dropped, and the phrase "former separation," which we never used, has been forced to mean the reform of 1837 itself, and our happy release from the corrupt elements of the Northern Church. Restore this phrase as we used it, and it becomes manifest that the reference is to all those causeless and mischievous divisions *in the South*, divisions of hearts, of churches, of schools, as of my native congregation, that of the sainted Wharey, of the College Church, the Richmond Church, the Union Seminary, and a multitude of other churches. Did not these dishonor religion? Did not the Old School Synods in the South declare that these separations here were not demanded by any vital difference of principle, and tenderly invite our New School brethren in the South to refrain from them as unnecessary? Was not some of the blame of them found on both sides? But, let this last question be answered as it may, I assert that, meeting our New School brethren for the purpose you sent us to them, a generous language of concession was the proper one to use. We met, not to apportion the several measures of guilt upon the culprits, and to avenge it, but to reconcile, to heal, to place that old guilt and its bitter consequences in the road to a happy oblivion. Men who meet for such a purpose, if they are sincere, will think it much more appropriate to assume a generous share of the blame of former divisions, than enviously to seek to seal it upon former opponents, whom they now profess to forgive.

But in fine, these words have illustrious precedents. They are borrowed almost verbatim from the act of union, 1758, between the Synods of New York and Philadelphia. Similar words were used again and again touching the very separations of 1837 by our greatest Old School fathers, and even by that Assembly itself. And that this Assembly, by adopting this act

of union with these words included, will not repudiate the reforms and principles of 1837, receives its crowning demonstration from this fact, that *the United Synod are here requested to join us upon emphatic assertion of every one of the principles which were then contended for, and which we now regard as of living value.*

2. The memorial which has been made a part of the argument against us, says that our statements touching the doctrine of "original sin" "savors of New School theology," because we "reject the error of those who assert that the sinner has no power of any kind for the performance of duty;" and because we say that the "fall has not destroyed in man any capacity of understanding or conscience" necessary to responsibility or to serving God. If we may conceive the meaning of these objections according to the abundant illustrations which have been given in the periodicals of that quarter of the church, their force lies against the words "powers" and "capacities," where we imply that fallen man still has some powers of some kind for the performance of duty, and then more definitely say that he retains those rational and moral capacities—so far as man unfallen had them, and so far as they are essential to free-agency and responsibility—which the fall greatly impaired, but did not destroy. The *gravamen* of the objection, then, is, that this language is, at least, incautious, in that it seems to teach that man's "inability" is not total, and that it revives the ill-expressed distinction between "natural" and "moral" "ability."

Now, is not this objection sufficiently met by the other sentences of the paragraph, which, in language borrowed from the Confession, and in other equivalent language also, assert again and again that man's "inability" *is* entire? But it is charged that the report is then convicted of inconsistency, because the word "power" and the word "ability" are equivalents; and thus some "ability" is granted in one sentence, while it is denied in another. Mr. Moderator, I emphatically deny that the two terms, in the well established usage of theology, have ever been equivalents. The persistent misrepresentation of the committee is founded only on a careless inattention. In the language of Calvinistic theology, the word *inability* has ever had a most sharply defined and specific meaning, as expressive of the lack only of one peculiar kind of power; thus, Hodge, *Outlines*, Chap.

XVIII., Ques. 13: "Ability consists in the power of the agent to change his own subjective state, to make himself prefer what he does not prefer, and to act in a given case in opposition to the coëxistent desires and preferences of the agent's own heart." The Confession of Faith, when utterly denying *ability* to fallen man, defines it as "*ability of will.*" But "*power*" has always, with even more uniformity, been used in the theology and dialectics in the widest and most general sense. Thus, Locke, Book II., Chap. XXI.: Power is "that which is able to *make* or to *receive any* change," So wide and universal is the term, it has ever since the days of Aristotle been held to embrace "*passive power*"—a phrase which Reid even declared to be self-contradictory. By the established usage of dialectics, then, the word "*power*" is so broad as to include even *mere susceptibilities.*

When, therefore, Pelagians and Arminians charged, and weak, incautious Calvinists admitted, that our doctrine of inability denied to man *all power of any kind*—a phrase very common in controversy thirty years ago—both were in error. Your committee, therefore, have done well in repudiating the ignorant and unfortunate and false admission. When they thus tacitly claim for man some "*powers*" of some kind for the performance of duty, they do not contradict themselves or the Confession where they say man has no "*ability.*" A given *species* may be absent, and yet some of the *genus* present. Some one has indeed been so heedless as to assert that the committee are in explicit, verbal opposition to the Confession, and to claim the latter as saying in express words that the sinner has "*no power*" to truly serve God. Mr. Moderator, this is simply untrue; it is a sheer mistake. There is no such proposition within the lids of the book. The Westminster divines were too accurate as dialecticians to say so. They say of man that he is "*unable,*" that he is wholly "*disabled,*" that he is "*made opposite unto,*" that he has "*no ability of will.*" They never say he "*has no power of any kind*" for serving God. The sentence under discussion was taken by your committee from Dr. Baxter, as has been already explained. The reply was made, that then Dr. Baxter too was incautious. No, Mr. Moderator, it is his critics who are incautious. Dr. Baxter, one of the ablest of all theologians in America, knew what he was about. His language was chosen in exact ac-

cordance with the established usage of theological nomenclature.

Why, then, did he, why did we, introduce this sentence? The answer is obvious to those who are familiar with the New and Old School controversy. The former party revived the charge, as old as Pelagianism, that our doctrine of *total inability* contravened the rational and moral intuitions of man; because where there is absolutely no power for duty, there can be no responsibility. Do not gentlemen remember how uniformly this was the staple of heretical cavils? How they embarrassed weak minds with it? How it was the uniform lever with which they endeavored to turn the Calvinistic theology into an absolute monstrosity? Why, sir, *was* not this cavil the *staple* of every one of the four propositions which the leaders of that party demanded of us to insert into the doctrinal teachings of the Assembly of 1837? Now, we believe that if we and the United Synod are at one in belief, we have come to understand each other about this old "bone of contention." The task the committee had to do, then, was to express that agreement in terms sufficiently perspicuous to make it appear whether there was substantial *harmony*, and at the same time *soundness*. The phrase proposed by Edwards, "Man has no moral 'ability,' but has sufficient 'natural ability,'" was often used for this intent by orthodox men and in an orthodox sense. This has been fully admitted on the other side; and I will venture the assertion, that there is not a particle of real difference between the committee and a single gentleman on this floor as to *that sense* in which sound Calvinists were accustomed to use that bungling phrase. Yet the phrase has been generally disused by Calvinists as ambiguous and inaccurate. *Therefore the committee carefully avoided it.*

Now, the complete answer to the cavil, that the sinner's total inability would destroy his responsibility, is in the proper explanation of what inability is. And here, I repeat, I am persuaded there is not a particle of real difference between any gentlemen on this floor. All intelligent Calvinists understand very well that it consists, *not in the extinction* of any of the powers which constituted man the creature he was before Adam's fall, and which make up his essence as a religious being, but in the *thorough moral perversion* of them all. The soul's

essence is not destroyed by the fall; if it were, in any part, man's responsibility would be to that extent modified. But all his faculties and susceptibilities now have a decisive and uniform, a native and universal, a perpetual and total moral perversion, by reason of the utter revolt of his will from God and holiness to self-will and sin; such that it is impossible for him, in his own free will, to choose spiritual good for its own sake. His inability is "inability of will." This is the doctrine of Calvinists; and if it be pushed farther than this, so as to deny to man as fallen any of those natural powers, either active or passive, which constituted him a proper subject of religious responsibility, the effect is only disastrous. Man's reason is outraged, and the guilty conscience is furnished with a mischievous pretext for denying the voluntariness of its sin, and excusing its unbelief. This truth your committee have attempted briefly to express, and they are still persuaded they have done so with sufficient correctness, and in terms justified by good usage.

But it is objected that when the committee say, man still has all his rational and moral "capacities," impaired indeed, but not destroyed, by the fall, the word "capacities" is objectionable; and the illustration which this point of your memorialists has received in the public prints is, that the word is unauthorized by good usage, and is dangerous as suggesting the semi-Pelagian idea that man has not only the same powers which made up his essence before his fall, but the same *measures of power* in them all. It is asked, Why did not this committee satisfy itself with the word "faculties?"

I will show why. Man's essence is constituted—to borrow the old nomenclature—not only of active, but of passive powers. The word *faculties* corresponds only to the former; but the natural *susceptibilities* are as truly of man's essence, and some at least of them are necessary to his constitution as a religious being. Now, no one would think of calling the susceptibility of sympathy, of love, of the ludicrous, of the beautiful, a *faculty*. Yet without these, would not man cease to be man? To say that man still has the *faculties* which Adam had, impaired indeed, but not destroyed, does not, then, express the whole truth. The whole truth is, that he still has the *faculties and susceptibilities* "on which free agency and responsibility depend." The word "capacities" has been used by the best modern writers to

express just this double idea, in strict conformity with its etymology. Sir Wm. Hamilton, while proposing to limit the word to the sense of *susceptibilities*, acknowledges that he has no authority for doing so earlier than Leibnitz. Says Hodge in his *Outlines*, Chap. XIV., Ques. 1: "The soul of man is not an organized whole consisting of several parts, and therefore what we call its several faculties are rather the capacity of the agent for discharging successively or concurrently the several functions involved." Says Hill, p. 404: "This account of the corruption of human nature does not imply that man has lost the *natural capacity of knowing God*," etc. And again: "In every situation he appears *capable* of the sentiment of religion."

THE ATONEMENT.

3. The third point objected to is our brief statement of the doctrine of the atonement. And this has been assailed most vehemently of all. Say your memorialists, "We understand the report as representing Christ to be the substitute of all mankind alike." . . . "Thus, according to the Confession, the decree of election would seem to have, in the order of thought, preceded in the divine mind the redemption wrought out by the Saviour. But the report appears to us to teach, according to the New School view of the subject, that first, the redemption was decreed for all men alike, and then God elected some of these as the redeemed ones to be saved."

The illustration of these criticisms is, we believe, best to be found in the periodicals which have sustained them. In showing how unfounded they are, I would premise by saying that there is among Calvinists, among ourselves, a slight difference in the arrangement of some details concerning the atonement and its application; yet both classes have always recognized each other as holding the essentials of the doctrine of particular redemption. Thus your memorialists adjust those details in such an order as to represent a sequence of thought in the divine mind itself in forming the decree, and in this sequence place the predestination of the elect first, and the purpose to send Christ to redeem them second. Others, as Amyraut, with whom possibly a few of our brethren still hold, suppose such a sequence only in an inverted order: first, the purpose to send Christ to die for man, and then out of the race to sovereignly elect some, to whom this

universal provision should be applied in effectual calling. Now to us it is perfectly clear that the Confession commits itself to neither of these schemes, for the reason that, whatever be their correctness or incorrectness, they contain refinements which go beyond the word of God. I have been taught to think, along with Dr. Baxter, upon this subject of a sequence between the parts of the divine decree, that the human reason can go no farther than this: its infirmity constrains it to think of that vast plan in parts, which in the infinite mind of God has no parts, but is one, eternal, single, all-embracing purpose. So, in our minds, the apprehension of one part must follow after that of another part. But with God it *cannot be so*; for that which is one and eternal must be absolutely coterminous. If, then, we impute our sequences to God, we plunge into error. The most we can comprehend is that God, in entertaining from eternity one part of this coterminous purpose, has regard to a state of facts as to that part destined by him to result from his same purpose as to other parts of his moral government. I presume to go no farther. And this view I am pleased to find sanctioned by the powerful support of Principal Hill, when he says: "Hence it may be observed how idly they are employed who presume to settle the order of the divine decree, and how insignificant are the controversies upon this subject which in the days of our fathers divided those who were agreed as to the general principles of Calvinism."

Now we suppose that the Westminster divines were guided by precisely the same wise view in passing over in silence, as they certainly do, the question between supra and infra-lapsarians. And I regard the slight difference between your memorialists and the Westminster divines in precisely the same light. In stating that common basis of Calvinism, touching this doctrine of the atonement, upon which we should invite our brethren of the United Synod to meet us, was it proper to demand of them the admission of refined details, not agreed on among ourselves, not demanded by the Scriptures, nor by the Confession? To do so would have been preposterous and positively unjust. The aim of your committee, then, was to state, after the example of the Confession, those features of the doctrine which distinguish Calvinists hereupon from Arminians and the New England school, and to introduce sentences which should clearly and be-

yond a peradventure cut up by the root all the notions which reduce the atonement to a didactic display, a moral drama, an exemplary incident, or a governmental expedient. Hence, we either say, or expressly imply, that Christ was our substitute; that his sufferings were truly vicarious; that they were properly penal; that they were a true satisfaction to justice; that they were necessary to make pardon possible, consistently with the perfections of God. Is not this right?

But it is objected that the report suggests error concerning the application and extent of the atonement. On this subject there are two aspects which Calvinists have always distinguished. One regards the *nature* of the atonement; the other its *design*; and we all hold that, in its intrinsic nature, the atonement is infinite. This is the consequence of the infinite dignity of the Mediatorial Person. Its value is, intrinsically, as sufficient for the sins of all men as of one. Its limitation to the elect is not to be sought, then, in its nature, but in its design; and this design, as to its actual application to them, is nothing else than *the decree*. It is not something else, different and separate, but the decree itself. Now the section of our report under remark, in its first sentences, speaks of the *nature* of the atonement, and in its last of its application. In its first sentences it uses general terms, "man's guilt," "our sins," etc., for it is speaking only of the *nature* of Christ's atoning work, which has no limits. And in speaking thus, I claim that the report does but imitate the Scriptures—"God so loved *the world*," etc.; "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the *sins of the world*," etc.—and the Confession itself. Why, then, should it be charged with error for using the same sort of language which the Bible itself does in this connection? But when the report proceeds to speak of the application of redemption, it declares, as I assert, in exact accordance with the spirit of our standards, that God applies it to all the elect, and to no others; and that this application is itself through the purchase of Jesus Christ. We do not invent a statement to establish a supra-lapsarian order of sequence between the purpose to save the elect and to send Christ to die; but neither does the Confession. It merely declares that redemption is applied through this work of Christ precisely to those to whom it was God's eternal purpose to apply it; and that is, his elect. The report speaks the same thing.

Moreover, the committee used the word *redemption*, as they believe, in strict accordance with Calvinistic usage, in a sense distinct from the word *atonement*. Redemption means, not only a provision of a vicarious penalty to satisfy for guilt, but in addition all the gracious gifts, of active obedience to be imputed, of effectual calling, of sanctification, and of glorification, which make up a completed salvation. All this is designed, purchased, and bestowed for the elect in and through Christ. And in this view they may quote, among many Calvinistic authorities, this of old Willison, *Catechism*, Ques.: "How doth Christ *redeem* his people from their bondage?" Ans. "Partly by price, or purchase; partly by power, or conquest."

In a word, the committee intended to express summarily that sound, but not ultra, view of the atonement held by Calvinists, and expressed in the ancient *formula*, "Christ died sufficiently for the race, efficaciously for the elect."

But the member from New Orleans, Dr. Palmer, insists that the report is, to say the least, "not happily worded," in that its phraseology leaves a loop-hole for the lubricity of the new theology. Well, Mr. Moderator, I presume that the committee would at any time have partly assented to this judgment; for you will bear us witness that our estimate of our labors has been modest. We did not claim that our phraseology was absolutely the best, but only that *it would do*. We admitted that language is an instrument so flexible that an indefinite improvement may be made in the verbal dress of any thoughts by continued care and criticism. But, sir, the course of this discussion inclines me to place a more self-applauding estimate upon our humble labors; and I must profess that I think our doctrinal statements are rather happily worded on this point. I have been convinced of this by the very objections of the critics.

One of these was that the phrase, Christ bore his sufferings "*as* the penalty" of guilt, was loose and incorrect, because it suggested, by the little word *as*, not only a substitution of one person for another—Christ for the sinner—but of one penalty for another; whereas, it was urged, we should have taught that Christ suffered the identical penalty due the sinner. Thus, they complained, the deceitful errorist was enabled to cheat us honest folk by talking about a penal satisfaction for sin, when, after all, he only meant a loose sort of *quasi* satisfaction. Now I have

been made very happy to find that our much abused little "*as*" expresses so much truth and so accurately. For the substitution, not only of one person for another, but of one penalty for another, in the atoning transaction called by theologians satisfaction, *is the very thing asserted* by the standard authors. It is obvious that if one person is substituted for another, then the penalty substituted cannot be identical with that in the room of which it came, in the sense of a *numerical identity*, however absolutely conformed it might be in a generic identity. And this distinction the acute Whately points out, in the introduction to his *Logic*, if I remember aright, in connection with this very subject. But farther, these divines all assert most emphatically, that in a case of penal satisfaction there is not an absolute generic identity between the penalty due and the penalty substituted. Turretin, Hill, Dr. John H. Rice, I find saying, with entire unanimity, that *satisfaction* is where *something else, not exactly* the debt due, but a moral equivalent, is accepted as sufficient by the injured party. According to those acute critics, the *Southern Presbyterian* and *Southern Presbyterian Review*, little "*as*" suggested this idea. But this, say these great masters, is just the idea of Christ's satisfaction. Is not this rather happy?

Again: we had defended ourselves against the complaint by pleading that the phrase, bore these sufferings "*as the penalty*" of guilt, was so natural, so common, and so fairly understood in the orthodox sense. Now all this is substantiated by the fact that the member from New Orleans, even in the midst of a passage objecting to it, could not help using the very phrase. In the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, p. 298, he complains that our "slippery opponents," while pretending to use many words that sound orthodox, will not say that "the sufferings of Christ were inflicted *as the penalty* threatened to the transgressor," etc. This, then, is what he would have them say, in order to be indisputably orthodox. But this is just what our committee asks them to say.

On the other hand, the *Southern Presbyterian* says this is not enough; nor that they shall say Christ's sufferings were vicarious, or that they were substitutionary, or that they were a satisfaction for guilt, because they may say all these in a loose sense. No; he will not be entirely pleased unless they say in express words, without the "*as*," that Christ "*bore the penalty*" of guilt.

Well, we thought that this was lifting the standard pretty high, when we remembered that good old Dr. Alexander was accustomed to say, that he who admitted the atonement to be *vicarious*, was substantially sound on that point. But we looked a few lines downward, and perceived that our report, in the article on justification, also used those very words, and said expressly, without the "as," that Christ "bore the penalty" of guilt. Thus, our paper has been so happy as to satisfy both these most lynx-eyed sentinels of orthodoxy exactly, even in demands which are, in appearance, contradictory. The difference between themselves *they* must settle.

Once more, I am led to believe that our effort to make a brief statement of the substance of this doctrine is rather happy, by noting a remarkable conformity between its structure and the Canons of the great Synod of Dort, on the atonement, and the article in which the National French Synod at Alençon caused Amyraut and Testard to recant their rash speculations, and the Heidelberg *Catechism*, and indeed the standards of the Reformers generally. The Heidelberg *Catechism*, the symbol of the German Reformed Church, which our own Assembly embraced as the very pink of orthodoxy, uses language which goes farther than our report. So that, while we have stated the doctrine in accordance with the belief of the purest Reformed churches, we have been even more guarded than some of them. Thus, Ques. 37: "What dost thou believe when thou sayest, 'He suffered?'" (in the creed). Ans. "That he bore in his body and soul the wrath of God against *the sin of the universal human race*, during the whole period of his life which he passed in the earth, but especially in its end; so that by his passion, as the sole propitiatory sacrifice, he might deliver our body and soul from eternal damnation, and purchase for us the grace of God, righteousness and eternal life."

Mr. Moderator, I have now nearly said what I proposed to say, and shall stop. But I cannot sit down without an apology to this Assembly for my tediousness, and thanks for the patience and unmerited attention with which my protracted remarks have been received. If the manner of them has seemed to any too blunt or dogmatic, I beg them to believe that this is but an appearance, and that I am profoundly actuated by a sentiment of

reverence for this venerable body as a whole, and of affectionate respect for the rights and feelings of each member in it.

Nor can I reconcile it to my feelings to omit a reference to the kindness and courtesy expressed for me individually, in this discussion, by those who differ from me, notwithstanding that they are, some of them, zealously opposed to the conclusions I advocate. Especially I would notice the undeservedly flattering references of the gentleman from New Orleans. He has been pleased, after expressing a far more favorable estimate of my powers than I am entitled to, to add an earnest wish that they may not be wasted on mere polemics. I can most heartily say, amen! for I have no conscious fondness for that work. And if this kind wish means, as it seems to imply, a reference to the polemics which have recently been waged over this question in the periodicals, and intimates that they have been, in the estimation of that gentleman, *rather a poor affair*, it is not for me to dissent from his judgment. He has kindly declared his desire that the return of peace may speedily restore me to the great work of training the young ministers of our church for heralding redemption. This also is my prayer, for it is a blessed work. But there is another which is still nobler, and that is the work of preaching the gospel itself. I feel, therefore, that I am uttering for Dr. Palmer even a more ample and generous wish than he has expressed towards me, and one which I am persuaded is dearest to his heart, when I now pray that God may speedily restore peace to all our bleeding country, that the queen city of the South, which is his home, may soon be cleansed from the polluting steps of the invader, that our brother may soon reassemble that noble congregation which was wont to hang with such delight upon his teachings, and during long and prosperous years may minister to that great city the glorious gospel of the Saviour, until the fame of his genius, his sanctified eloquence, and his usefulness, is borne on the white wings of her imperial commerce to the ends of the earth. Meantime it will be my happiness to return to the quiet shades of Union Seminary, and gathering there, amidst the ragged fields of poor old battle-scared Virginia, a few of her maimed young soldiers with one arm or one leg, to teach them, in my plain way, to preach Christ.

THE REVISED BOOK OF DISCIPLINE:

A DISCUSSION OF SOME OF THE CHANGES PROPOSED BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE General Assembly of 1857 appointed Drs. Thornwell, James Hoge, R. J. Breckinridge, E. P. Swift, A. T. McGill and Charles Hodge, with Judges Sharswood, Allen and Leavitt, a committee to revise the Book of Discipline. This committee met in Philadelphia in August, 1858, Messrs. Leavitt and Allen being absent, and performed their task, devoting to it *four or five days*' labor. The result has for some months been published to the churches in the newspapers; and the time is fast approaching when the Presbyteries will appoint the commissioners to that Assembly which must pass upon the proposed changes. Meantime they have evoked little discussion, and that of a fragmentary character, with the exception of an article defending most of the proposed amendments in the October number of the *Princeton Review*. This essay seems purposely to reveal its author as the respected editor of that quarterly, Dr. Hodge, to whom we therefore take the liberty of referring. While our Rules of Discipline are not of as fundamental importance as our Confession, or even as our Book of Government, they greatly concern the comfort and rights of Presbyterians, and the peace of the church. More than this, principles will be seen to be involved in this discussion which touch the fundamentals of our theory of the church. By thoughtlessly adopting legislative details, which are out of harmony with our theory, we greatly endanger the theory itself; we shall gradually undermine it. This must be our justification for feeling, as humble members of that church, anxious that the thorough examination of the Revised Book shall be made, so as not to allow the subject "to go by default" in the approaching Assembly. After waiting for more experienced hands to undertake this discussion, until it will soon be too late, we now venture to occupy the attention of our brethren, with much diffidence and respect.

As Presbyterians, we consider that no apology can, in any case, be necessary for the exercise of that right of free, but courteous, discussion which belongs to the humblest, as well as the first among us, touching every subject of ecclesiastical concernment propounded to our suffrages. We doubt not that all the members of the Assembly's committee would themselves be the last to wish this right of opposing their own report curtailed. We wish also to express, once for all, our high respect, not only for the persons and characters of those distinguished brethren, but also for their opinions. When, indeed, we conceive of the reader as running his eye over the list of venerated and precious names which we have just recited, we cannot but feel that he may naturally conclude from that glance alone, that the objections urged against their work must be ungrounded, and inquire, "Who is this that arrays himself against such odds?" We are, indeed, in the account of literature and of fame, in comparison, as nobodies; and it has caused a genuine diffidence to find ourselves differing from such guides. But we remember that we write for *Presbyterians*—a people least of all *adliti in verba ullius magistri jurare*—and that views maturely considered and honestly offered, from love to the church and a sense of duty, are entitled to a fair hearing. For our remarks we ask no more. If any, or all of them, are ungrounded, let them remain without influence.

We shall take up those amendments upon which we wish to remark in the natural order in which they occur, as we proceed from chapter to chapter. We have only to request of those who may take the trouble to read these lines, that each case may be weighed upon its own merits; and that, if objections advanced against some of the proposed changes should seem to them insufficient, or even feeble, this may not prejudice the conclusion concerning other points. On a subject so extensive, great brevity cannot be promised; but it is promised that brevity shall be studied as far as is consistent with thoroughness.

Let the general objection, then, be considered, which lies against the changing of statute law wherever the change is not unavoidable. Language is naturally an imperfect vehicle of meaning; its ambiguities usually pass undiscovered, because no keen and contending interests test its possible or probable meanings. One may frame sentences which seem to him per-

fectly perspicuous; but no human wisdom can foresee the varying, yet plausible, constructions which the language may be made to bear. The fact that ambiguities cannot now be pointed out in the new phrases of the Revised Discipline is nothing. No human skill in writing can avoid them, or foresee what they will be. Nothing but the touch-stones of particular cases, as they arise, can reveal them. Hence the old statutes are better, because their language has already been tested by the adjudication of a multitude of varying cases under them, and fixed by established precedents. So that the old might be intrinsically worse than the new, and yet it might be most impolitic to exchange it. By altering our Book, we at once lose all the advantages resulting from all the litigation upon the articles amended from the foundation of our government. We have just begun to enjoy the advantages of a good Digest of the Assembly's precedents, fixing the meaning and extent of law, in the work of Mr. Baird. How large a part of this will now be superseded and useless? It is not that we begrudge the loss of the mere labor expended in compiling and printing this useful work; this, relatively to the church at large, is a trifle. But we lose the knowledge and usage, the costly result of seventy years' history and contest. Does any one dream that all these uncertainties will not have to be gone over again before the intent of the new statutes is "ascertained," to use the legal phrase, by a long series of adjudications? How much uncertainty, how many judicial contests, how much confusion of right, and how much distress, must be witnessed before the Revised Book shall have reached that comfortable degree of established certainty which was acquired by the old?

The ambiguities of the old have indeed been asserted as a reason for revision; and it has been said that it is in some parts so faulty as to make church courts forever liable to uncertainties of construction. But this uncertainty, which is usually witnessed in the General Assembly, is due rather to the constitution of the court, to its unwieldy size and popular character, to the inexperience of its members in judicial processes, and to inattention, than to any peculiar vice in the language of our statutes. If our brethren think to eradicate these vexatious and ludicrous confusions from that large body by making new statutes, we forewarn them that "Leviathan is not so tamed."

Take the oft-mooted point, as to who are "the original parties" in an appeal, which is most frequently cited in evidence of the imperfection of our present Discipline; it would seem that "the original parties" can be no other than the *parties to the case at its origin*. The fact that so simple a matter has made so much trouble reveals plainly enough the hopelessness of evading the annoyance by making statutes new, and for that very reason of less ascertained meaning. No sooner will these new laws be inaugurated than the rise of litigated points will reveal in them ambiguities to which we were all blind before, including their very authors; but which, when once raised, will appear as obvious to us all as was the way of making an egg stand upright on its little end to the Spanish savans, after Columbus had shown them how to flatten the shell. Seeing, then, that our present Discipline causes to no one any grievous wrong, it would be better for us, on this general ground, to "let well enough alone."

It has been said that the Presbyterian is a conservative church. Mankind often give very inconsistent manifestations of their professed principles. The past year we have seen the conservatism of this great church thrown into quite a hubbub by the proposal to correct a ridiculous typographical blunder on one page of its Hymn Book! But now it seems as though it were ready to commit itself, almost without inquiry, to a sweeping change of an important branch of its constitution. Is not this somewhat akin to "straining out the gnat, that we may swallow the camel?"

Chap. I., Secs. 3, 4. The first departure of moment from the language of the old Book, is in the definition of what constitutes a disciplinable offence. The reader is requested to compare the new with the old. The tenor of the old makes the Bible the statute book of our courts, in judging the morals of all our people. (See Chap. I., Secs. 3, 4.) In the Revised Discipline it is proposed to speak as follows:

Sec. 2. "An offence, the proper object of discipline, is anything in the faith or practice of a professed believer which is contrary to the word of God; the Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly being accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States

of America as standard expositions of the teachings of Scripture in relation both to faith and practice."

"Nothing, therefore, ought to be considered by any judicatory as an offence, or admitted as matter of accusation, which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture, or from the regulations and practice of the church founded on Scripture, and which does not involve those evils which discipline is intended to prevent."

The latter paragraph is copied by the committee, without change, from the old Book. The two changes here proposed are to teach that nobody can commit a disciplinable offence except "professed believers," instead of including all "church members;" and to introduce the Westminster standards as the rule and measure by which discipline shall be administered. Of the former change, more anon. To the latter we object, in the first place, that here is one of the cases of mischievous ambiguity which were predicted as likely to attach to any new phraseology. Let this chapter become the law of the church, and we fear that we shall be ever debating whether it means that any act may be a disciplinable offence which is reprobated by either the Scriptures or the Westminster standards, or that the prohibition of both these must concur to make an offence. The latter meaning would, of course, confine the possible range of disciplinable offences within the things prohibited in our standards. And this is clearly the meaning attached to the whole chapter by the *Princeton Review*. Surely if anybody should know what the committee means, this author, himself a most able, diligent and influential member, should. He says, pp. 695, 696: "Among us, as Presbyterians, nothing can be regarded as an offence which is not contrary to the Westminster Confession of Faith or Catechisms." . . . "We have agreed to abide by our own standards in the administration of discipline. Outside of that rule, so far as our church standing is concerned, we may think and act as we please." But when the church court comes to interpret this Revised Discipline in the light of its own language alone, it will probably remain in great doubt whether Section 2 means what the *Princeton Review* says it does, or whether it only means that the manner in which our standards interpret and apply the prohibitory precepts of Scripture is to be the model and exemplar by which the judicatory ought to

interpret similar parts of Scripture. And the paragraph then appended, standing, as it does, in the very words of the old Book, which is allowed to teach the opposite sense to that of the *Princeton Review*, will greatly aggravate this doubt. According to that paragraph, an offence to be disciplinable must, in the first place, involve those evils which discipline is intended to prevent; and then it must also contravene Scripture, or the regulations and practice of the church founded thereon. The conjunction is disjunctive. May not the Revised Discipline be understood to mean, with the old one, that an offence which contravenes *either* Scripture or the standards may be disciplinable?

But let us suppose the *Princeton Review* is right, and that the Revised Discipline means to teach that nothing shall be a disciplinable offence except what can be proved to be such out of the Westminster standards. Then we object, secondly, that those standards do not profess to be exhaustive in their enumeration of disciplinable offences. The circumstances of mankind vary so infinitely, that if a statute book were to enumerate specifically all the offences which will arise in all time, "the world would not hold the books which should be written." A complete moral code must therefore speak on this other plan; it must, within moderate compass, fix such general principles, and so illustrate and define them in concrete cases, that all possible forms of duty or sin may be defined therefrom "by good and necessary consequence." This is what the Bible has done. But this requires infinite wisdom, which the Westminster divines never claimed. Shall we accept the following consequence, that if perchance these fallible men forgot to enumerate, and they themselves not professing to make a complete enumeration, they were incapable of such an absurdity, some wicked act which yet God's word, the acknowledged rule of life to Protestants, clearly describes as such an offence as may be disciplined, therefore, forsooth, the sinner may commit this act as often as he pleases, and retain his church standing, unwhipt of justice? For instance, the Larger Catechism, the most comprehensive, does not condemn *spirit rapping*, nor *lotteries*, nor *duelling*—three prevalent abominations condemned by God in principle, and most obviously disciplinable. Is it answered that these may be condemned out of the Westminster standards by inference? We

rejoin, the expounder of the Revised Discipline in the *Princeton Review* has no right to resort to inferential interpretations of the standards. He has objected to just such applications of the word of God; and we think all will agree with us, that if our church franchises are to be suspended on the inferences and interpretations of a judicatory, we would at least as willingly have the blessed Scriptures for the text as the imperfect writings of fallible men. When the glorious Assembly of 1845 saved the church, and probably the Union, by refusing to make slaveholding a bar to communion, did it ground its decision on the pettifogging plea that slaveholding was not mentioned as a specific "offence" in the standards? Indeed, no! How would its decree have been shorn of its moral strength and glory if it had done so? It recurred at once to the solid rock, by saying, *The word of God does not make slaveholding "an offence," therefore cannot we.* May God forbid that anything shall ever be the statute book of Presbyterian Church courts, as to Christian morals, except the Holy Bible.

This leads to the third remark, that there is obvious ground of distinction between adopting a human composition concerning theological opinions as the test of official *status* and privilege, and making a human composition concerning Christian ethics the test of church membership. This, for three reasons. The ethical precepts of God's word are vastly less subject to varying and doubtful construction than the doctrinal statements. The theological system may be represented with substantial completeness, or at least in a manner perfectly characteristic and discriminative, in a limited set of propositions; whereas the forms of moral action are endlessly diversified. And last, when we require our deacons and presbyters to stand or fall officially by a doctrinal composition of human authority, we do not call in question a personal franchise, which is inalienable to the Christian, but only a privilege which the church confers. It is the *Christian right* of the credible believer to enjoy the church communion; it is not a *right* of any believer to serve the brotherhood in office when the brotherhood do not want him in office. So that it may be very proper for us to take a human composition as the doctrinal test of qualification for office, while yet we take only God's own precepts as the statute book of Christian ethics.

The main objection against all this is, that then no one would be certain what he had to count upon, because of the contradictory opinions of Christians concerning the ethical teachings of the Bible. It is said some Christians think slaveholding, some wine-drinking, a *malum per se*. The obvious reply is, that no institution administered by imperfect man will ever be perfect in its workings. Let us adopt that system which makes the possible imperfections fewest and least mischievous. And this will be to retain the Bible as our statute book in ethical matters. For, as has been said, its ethical precepts are so perspicuous, that the serious differences of interpretation are rare. The standards of the church, and the General Assembly, may properly, as they have done, fix these disputed points from time to time—a function very different from taking the place of the Bible as a complete ethical code for judicatories. And surely, if the Bible is not a book perspicuous enough to protect the Christian from judicial wrong, when he has three higher courts above the first to which he may appeal for protection, it can scarcely be claimed as a sufficient rule of life for the simplest child of God.

Chap. I., Sec. 6. The Revised Discipline proposes to change the propositions which here assert that all baptized persons “are members of the church,” are “subject to its government and discipline,” and when adult are “bound to perform all the duties of church members,” in the following respects. For the first proposition it substitutes the words, “are under its government and training.” At the end of the paragraph it proposes to add the following: “Only those, however, who have made a profession of faith in Christ are proper subjects of judicial prosecution.” This change was foreshadowed in the alteration of Section 3.

We cannot but regard it as both unnecessary and unfortunate. The doctrine of the Bible is, that the object of God in instituting the marriage of saints is “to seek a godly seed” (Mal. ii. 15); that God has therefore included and sanctified the family institution of saints within the church institution, that school of Christ, promising to be “a God to us and to our seed” (Gen. xvii. 7); that therefore the initiatory sacrament should be administered to the children of saints as well as to themselves (Gen. xvii. 12; Matt. xxviii. 19); and that though these unconverted

children are excluded from certain privileges of the church to which faith is essential, first by their lack of understanding, and next by their own voluntary impenitency, yet they are as truly and as properly the objects of the moral teaching and government (*διδασκαλία, disciplina*) of this spiritual school as the saints themselves, until they wickedly repudiate their church covenant. For both the Scriptures and experience teach that the children of the saints are the main hope of the Christian cause, and that youth is the time to train and form the soul; so that if the church excluded the children of saints from its discipline, it would be manifestly recreant to its great end and object, which is to propagate the knowledge and service of God in the earth. This has ever been the theory of the church universal, with the painful exception of Anabaptists and Immersionists. To this theory the language of the old Discipline is, to say the least, sufficiently faithful. Why, then, soften it, when by so doing we give a pretext to these adversaries to glory, as though we found our theory untenable, and were receding from it? Boasts and taunts have already been provoked by this proposed change, which are not only painful, for this is a trifle, but most injurious to God's truth.

Indeed, it cannot be denied that a desire to soften the old and time-honored phraseology is a significant indication of our departure from the practice of our system. The Presbyterian Church has, alas! come far short of its duty to impenitent baptized persons, in neglecting the pastoral and sessional oversight of their demeanor, faithful private admonition, Bible class and catechetical instruction, and the righteous purging out of the membership by discipline of those who show a persistent intention to repudiate their parents' covenant with God, either by continued unbelief or by overt immoralities. But if we find ourselves recreant to our scriptural theory in our conduct, shall we, therefore, degrade our theory so as to make it tally with our sinful practice? or shall we not rather, as men that fear God, raise our practice to our theory?

We see no advantage, but only disadvantage, in the substitution of the word *training* for *discipline*. "Though both terms have in some respects the same import, we are particularly attached to the latter in this connection, because of its immemorial use; and especially because it is more comprehensive, em-

bracing all that instruction, guidance, care, advice, counsels, admonition, restraint, reproof and encouragement, which should be given, as the case may demand, to all who are members of the church and under its care, whether communicants or non-communicants. We prefer it, moreover, because it is more expressive of the apostolic commission, 'Go ye, therefore, and teach (*disciple*) all nations.' Now, the church is a school where the disciple is instructed in the lessons there taught." These words of another we can cordially adopt as expressing just views.

Farther, if we roundly assert, as the Revised Discipline does, that "*all baptized persons* are members of the church," we see little consistency in then exempting a large class of them from its government. Is it intended to be taught that whenever a baptized person, arriving at the years of understanding, fails to believe, repent and commune, he is by his own act excommunicated? Surely not; for then all baptized persons would not be members of the church, as the Revised Discipline asserts; there would be a large class of baptized persons not church members. The article, to be consistent, should have said, "*all baptized infants* are church members." Now, what kind of citizenship is that which does not place the citizen under the government of that commonwealth of which he is a citizen? We cannot understand it. The General Assembly of 1856 did itself say, in answer to an overture, that the relation of impenitent baptized persons to the church is that of minors to a commonwealth. The state of a minor is in general this, that while he is debarred, by reason of some remaining personal disqualifications, from certain of the higher privileges of the citizens, he enjoys the protection and other advantages of the commonwealth, and, if sane, is subject to its laws and penalties in the main, as the other citizens are. A minor may not steal, nor commit arson, nor stab, nor murder; and if he does, although he has not been allowed to vote, to sit in juries, and to hold office, he will be tried and punished. If, then, the Assembly adopts this Revised Discipline, it should retract its definition of 1856; but the truth and good sense which are in it no General Assembly has power to retract. The membership of baptized persons, if once granted, is forever inconsistent with their formal exemption from discipline.

Again, if this doctrine is adopted, our standards will be, in the opinions of the great majority, out of joint at another place.

The Book of Government, Chap. XV., Sec. 4, excludes every person from voting for pastor "who refuses to submit to the censures of the church, regularly administered, or who does not contribute his just proportion, according to his own engagements, or the rules of that congregation, to its necessary expenses." The more common opinion is, that in these words the book intends to describe what non-communicing, baptized persons may vote, for it is plausibly urged, if none such may vote, why does the book use a periphrasis? Why does it not cut the matter short by saying, "In this election only communicants may vote"? Now, if this is correct—a point which we may not here decide—the book clearly contemplates some baptized non-communicants, old enough, too, to pay and vote, who are yet submissive to church censures. Are these church censures inflicted without "judicial prosecution"? Hardly, for then it could not very well be said that they are "regularly administered."

The closing words of this chapter in the Revised Discipline say that no one, except a professed believer, is "subject of judicial prosecution." It has been remarked that these words need not be objected to, "because a case is never heard of in which a baptized impenitent person is subjected to such prosecution." We are by no means ready to make the admission. Even on the ground asserted in excuse of the proposition, it is liable to the objection that it decides more and broader principles than the case requires, a fault which every intelligent judge would reprobate in secular laws. But we are by no means sure that the church always does right in so totally disusing this power of judicial citation over impenitent persons. The most plausible theory on which our present policy can be excused of leaving the impenitent baptized persons of the church so "at loose ends," would be this, that when a baptized child reaches and passes the years of moral responsibility, refusing to believe and repent, he is by this sin of unbelief virtually *self-suspended* from sealing ordinances. But he is still under the guardianship and teaching of the church, and under its pastoral oversight. Now, we ask, may not a *suspended member* be cited and tried for a subsequent offence? May he not be excommunicated for a subsequent offence? Do we not give him a letter of dismissal as a member suspended to the care of another church when he emigrates? And this leads us to remark, that a legitimate and

beneficial use of this power of citation over non-communicants may easily be imagined. Let us suppose a church in which the Bible theory of "the school of Christ" was not so deplorably neglected as it usually is; in which the baptized children were practically considered by pastor and session a part of their sacred charge, their jurisdiction; where the children, after due instruction in their tender years, received pastoral admonition as they came to years of understanding, that they were now "bound to perform all the duties of church members," to repent, believe, give Christ their hearts, and thus remember him at his table; where this first admonition was followed up with occasional faithful and tender remonstrances upon their continued irreligion, reminding them again and again of the voluntary nature and sinfulness of their unbelief. Many of these lambs of the flock, we may be sure, would early give their hearts to the Saviour. These become members in full communion. Many others would continue some time impenitent, but regular in their Christian morals, habitual frequenters of church ordinances, and in the main docile and respectful towards Christianity, so far as natural temper went. These would properly be retained as the citizens in their minority in the Christian commonwealth, still precluded from the full franchises, but enjoying—we say *enjoying*, for would they not themselves esteem them privileges?—the public and private admonitions of the presbyters. But a few would practically repudiate their Christian birthright and cast scorn upon it, by profanely deserting God's house, word and Sabbaths, or by contemptuous repulses of pastoral instruction and love, or by overt and deliberate crimes. Now, what are these? Are they still church members? If it is said, No! we ask, by what process did they cease to be such? Formally, they are still members; but why sleeps the rod of discipline, which ought to be wielded to cleanse God's house of pollution and scandal? Shall immersionists point at these blots, these "spots in our feasts of charity," and say that this is the inevitable result of infant church membership? We reply, that the appropriate solution of these cases ought to be in the exercise of that "judicial prosecution" which the Revised Discipline proposes to exclude. Instead of suffering them to fall by neglect into a virtual excommunication, which yet is not a formal and regular one, a treatment of the case of all others

most dishonorable to the church, and dangerous to the misguided souls themselves, let them be cited by the session. "They would probably condemn the summons." Well, let them do so; let the citation be repeated, and let them be formally excommunicated for contumacy. Thus the church is rid of the scandal of their membership in the only consistent way, and her final testimony is borne against their sin. This, let us say, would be agreeable to the usages of the primitive church, which subjected *catechumens* to her discipline as well as communicants. If it be urged that men, professedly impenitent, would usually scorn the whole process, and that, therefore, the process would be improper, inasmuch as discipline owes so much of its value to the support of the moral approbation of society, we rejoin by asking how the sentiment of Christian society has become so lax and unsound on this point? Is it not through this very neglect of pastoral discipline? We repeat with emphasis, let us not attempt to plead a state of things produced by our own sin as our justification. Let us rather reform. But in fact, this discipline, if righteously administered, would even now be far from contemptible in the eyes of many baptized unbelievers, for they often value their church privileges highly.

When it is said that none are "proper subjects of judicial prosecution except those who have made a profession of faith in Christ," the idea obviously involved is this, that it is unreasonable to exercise a church government over a man to which he has not given his own voluntary assent. This squints far too much towards the independent idea, that the church is a voluntary society. If the act of the parents in bringing the child under the covenant of baptism cannot properly place him under church jurisdiction, except it be confirmed by the child's own assent, why should they perform it in his infancy at all? Let the baptismal covenant be *something* or *nothing*. If it is any thing at all, how can it effect less than we have attributed to it? As to the necessity of a personal and voluntary consent to constitute any one a subject of church government, we remark that our theory does no baptized person wrong, because God has not given to any human soul the right to choose whether he will belong to his visible kingdom or not. To decide that he shall, in advance of his own assent, robs the child of no privilege, for it is no privilege of a rational and moral soul to be a subject of

Satan and heir of damnation, which is usually the only other alternative to a visible church membership. Church government is as much an "ordinance of God" for man as civil government. As our sons are *born* citizens and subjects of civil commonwealths, whether they choose it or not, and not constituted subjects by their free assent, so are the children of the people of God baptized into his commonwealth; they are citizens by his ordination.

There is, therefore, no consistent stopping place for us between treating all baptized persons as *bona fide* members of the visible church, until their membership is legally severed, and accepting the Anabaptist theory of the church. We must either go the whole length, or give up our principles. For these reasons we greatly prefer the old phraseology to the new, and deprecate the adoption of the latter, as committing us to grave error, and as placing our discipline in formal opposition to our creed.

Chaps. II., III., IV. These chapters of our present Book are, in the Revised Discipline, somewhat transposed and condensed. The changes in principle are slight, and either unobjectionable, or positively commendable; and something is perhaps gained in perspicuity and naturalness of order. But here we must make one objection. The fourth chapter, of actual process, in the Revised Discipline, concludes the first section, which in other respects is equivalent in substance to Chapter IV., Section 5, of the present Book, with these words: "At the second meeting of the judicatory, the accused shall plead, in writing, to the charges; and if he fail to do so, at the third meeting of the judicatory they shall be taken as confessed, provided he has been duly cited." The reader is left in doubt of the meaning of this provision, and of the kind of case it is intended to meet. Does the first member of the sentence mean that the accused, after being duly cited to appear in person, and after enjoying his "ten free days," may still remain absent, and answer only in writing? How, then, is the trial to proceed at this second meeting, as it ought in due course? Or does it mean only, that being personally present, he is to answer "guilty" or "not guilty" on paper, instead of uttering his answer in the open court with his lips, while the clerk records it? Again, what is the sort of case covered by the second member of the sentence? If it is meant for the case of a man who obeys the citation, who is bodily

present in the judicatory, and who yet will not open his lips to say either "guilty" or "not guilty," we presume this is a case which will never occur. The man who intended to be thus stubborn would very surely refuse to come at all. We can hardly suppose that the committee mean this provision for the case of the man who, when cited, refuses to attend; for not only is that case distinctly provided for elsewhere, but it is to be dealt with differently. The offence charged, says the Revised Discipline, shall in this case not be taken as confessed, but *shall be examined* in the absence of the contumacious accused, the court appointing some one to represent him. (See Sec. 4.) In such a work as this, the smallest uncertainty is an important blemish, for no one knows how much confusion it may cause.

Chap. V. *Of Process against a Minister.* The only alterations proposed by the Revised Discipline in this chapter are of secondary moment. To the fifth section, which provides for placing a minister on his trial at the charge of a personal accuser, or of a persistent common fame, the committee propose to add the following words: "Nevertheless, each church court has the inherent power to demand and receive satisfactory explanations from any of its members concerning any matters of evil report." The manner of asserting this power appears at least incautious. It is provided in the present discipline, that where a common fame does not possess the permanency and probability which would make it proper ground of process, the person aggrieved by it may, of his own motion, go before his appropriate judicatory, and demand a judicial investigation, which the court is in such case bound to grant. Now, if it were said that the brethren of a minister, when they believe his character to be suffering under such a common fame, and he still appears unconscious or indifferent to the injury done his reputation, should have leave to advise him to avail himself voluntarily of an explanation, or of the examination above described, we could heartily approve. And such advice might, in a strong case, be enforced by reminding the minister under evil report how the rumors, if neglected, might gather such strength as would oblige his brethren to open an actual process against him on common fame. But farther than advice no judicatory should be allowed to go without those regular forms of judicial process which are so necessary to the protection of equal rights. The

sentence under remark, as it now stands, would seem to give a judicatory power to compel a brother, who should be held innocent till he is proved guilty, but who is suffering under the infliction of evil tongues, to take his place in the confessional against his own consent. Suppose the suffering brother should say that he, in that discretion which the constitution gives him, has judged it best to let the vile tattle die of its own insignificance and falsity, without notice; or that the nature of the case is such that explanation would be mortifying or indelicate, while yet no guilt attaches to it; or that the very act of placing him on the stool of confession, and thus singling him out from all the brethren, to whose innocency his own is in *point of law* exactly equal, is an infliction on his good name and feelings; and that he therefore regards this explanation which is "demanded" of him as a grievance and a *quasi* penalty? The plain doctrine of liberty and equal rights is this, that no ruling power shall have leave to impose on any one of its subjects anything which is of the nature of a discriminating infliction, which is not equally imposed at all times on all the subjects, until he is proved to be deserving of the infliction by a conviction duly reached by course of law. We may not do any pain whatever to one member of a judicatory, which is not equally done at the same time to all the members, unless he consents, or unless he is *proved* to deserve it, by being confronted with his witnesses. It is tyranny. No court should be allowed to proceed further in this matter than advice. The annual inquiry held by the Methodist Conferences, in "passing the character" of members, is far less odious than this provision may become, because that inquiry is held as to all the brethren alike. In fine, the provision proposed by the committee is *new*; let us beware, for we do not know how it may work, until we learn by an experience, which may be a bitter one.

The next objectionable change proposed by the committee is the total omission of Section 9, which now provides, that when a minister is under actual process, the judicatory may have discretion to suspend his privilege of acting as a presbyter and member in all matters in which his own rights as a defendant are not concerned, until his acquittal. The committee should not have expunged this section unless they meant to take away this discretion absolutely, for *the silence* of the statute book can

never, with safety, be allowed to convey any discretion to the ruling bodies as to the rights of the ruled. Here, at least, the principle of strict construction must be upheld by any one not almost insanely reckless. The ruler must claim no powers except those expressly granted, or necessarily implied in the law by which he rules; all other powers must be regarded as intentionally reserved from and denied to him. Otherwise, what safety would individuals find in constitutions and laws? We must therefore understand that by suppressing this ninth section, the committee mean positively to deprive judicatories of this discretionary power. Why, then, did they not suppress the parallel enactment in Chapter IV., Section 12 (old Book, Sec. 18), in which discretionary power is granted to take away from the layman or ruling elder the right of communing while under process? Why this partiality? It is invidious. If the *probable guilt* of a layman or elder makes it improper in some cases to allow him to approach the Lord's supper for a time, lest perhaps it be found afterwards that he hath profaned it; does not the *probable truth* of some shameful or atrocious charge against a minister make it yet more improper that he should be allowed in the interval of examination to sit and rule in Christ's house, wielding all the high and sacred powers of a governor and exemplar to the flock? Surely the probability of a profane character in a minister is more mischievous, more shocking, than in a layman, and the sanctities of Christ's kingdom should be guarded against such a man with greater, not with less, jealousy. We fear the intelligent laity of our church will be tempted to take note that the committee which proposes this invidious distinction was a committee of preachers, with one exception.

The other noticeable change proposed in this chapter is the entire omission of the fourteenth section. In our present Book this section recommends that "a minister under process for heresy or schism should be treated with Christian and brotherly tenderness," that "frequent conferences ought to be held with him, and proper admonitions administered." All this the committee propose to suppress, leaving no intimation that there is to be any difference between the temper of the prosecution, where we have to separate from us the devout and pure Christian, whose understanding has been unfortunately entangled concerning the perseverance of the saints, or unconditional de-

crees, and the wretch who has abused a sacred profession as a cloak for his villanies. But surely there is a wide difference in the kind and degree of the guilt in the two cases. We hold, indeed, that man is responsible for his belief, and that error is never adopted, as to points adequately taught in the Scriptures, without some element of sinful feeling or volition in the shape of prejudice, haste, egotism, or such like. But yet there is this wide difference, that unless we are ourselves insane, we who sit in judgment on our brother do not ourselves claim theological infallibility. We recognize a multitude of other brethren who hold opinions similar to the ones we are prosecuting in him, supposing that his heresy does not affect the fundamentals of redemption, as members of the true visible church, and we commune with them at the Lord's table. Yea, we may probably commune with the heretical brother himself after his condemnation, as a true, though erring, brother. Here indeed is the vital difference between the trial for heresy and the trial for crime, that unless the heretic has denied fundamental truths, our condemnation does not separate him from the visible church of Christ, possibly not even from our own branch, but it only deprives him of that official character among us which it is now not for edification that he should hold. If he does not choose to remain a Presbyterian layman, he may take a certificate of membership and join the Methodist, the Baptist, the Lutheran, the Mennonite, the Moravian, the Episcopal, or some other communion, where our principles will still require us to meet him as a brother in Christ. But when a person is disciplined for *criminal conduct*, we condemn him on the principle that there is no evidence he is Christ's servant at all; when we turn him out of the Presbyterian Church we turn him also out of the church catholic; we transfer him to the kingdom of Satan. Even were a minister disciplined for heresy in fundamentals, if his morals continued pure, there would still not be that social degradation, that pollution of character as a citizen and neighbor, which attaches to crime; and the frailty of the human understanding admonishes us to judge very leniently of the guilt attaching to errors of head where the heart appears sincere. For these reasons we conceive that there is a broad distinction between the case of the heretic and that of the moral apostate, and that the Book of Discipline has done most scripturally, most appropri-

ately, in enjoining a different treatment. Our zeal is so apt, alas! to run into bigotry, and our love of truth into party spirit, in times of theological schism, that the caution contained in this fourteenth section is eminently wise and seasonable. Let us by all means retain it. Why was it proposed to omit it? Do we set ourselves up as superior to the framers of our constitution in our righteous abhorrence of error and fidelity to truth?

Chapter VI. of the Revised Discipline is a short but wholly a new chapter. It is entitled, "Of Cases without Process." The first section enacts that persons who confess, or who committed the offence in the presence of the court, shall be condemned without process. The cases of those who confess their offence seems to be sufficiently provided for in the chapters on "actual process," where it is said that if the party plead guilty judgment shall immediately follow. As to the other case, every deliberative body is necessarily clothed with so much of power over its own members as to prevent and redress "breaches of privilege" committed on its floor; this is essential to self-preservation. But farther than this we cannot perhaps go with safety. When an offence is committed on the floor of a judicatory, and of course usually against itself or one of its members, the body will be in no safe temper to administer justice with wisdom and mercy. We surmise that few of these *extempore* verdicts, passed as they might be, so far as this chapter goes, within five minutes after the judicatory had been agitated and inflamed by the outrage, would be satisfactory to their own authors after they had slept upon them. In case of such an offence in open court, calling for any thing heavier than a reprimand, the charge and citation might be immediately made, with propriety, and a sufficient number of members or spectators then and there detailed as witnesses; but still, it is far better that the "ten free days" should intervene before the sentence is passed. The judges will have time to cool; perhaps the offender also. The *Princeton Review* reasons: "That the end of a trial is to ascertain the facts of the case; if these are patent to all concerned, there can be no use in a trial." Not so; the trial is to ascertain not only the facts, but also a penalty righteously apportioned to the degree of guilt, and for the latter end not only knowledge of facts but deliberation is necessary.

Again: the language of the proposed enactment is general,

“his offence having been committed in the presence of the court.” Does this mean that if a minister, for instance, commit an offence in the presence of a Synod or General Assembly, that body may discipline him immediately, thus usurping the jurisdiction which the constitution gives to the Presbytery?

The second section of this chapter will probably strike the reader as somewhat amusing. It provides that if there be an appeal from one of these *extempore* judgments, as there doubtless will be in most cases, as there is no accuser, some communicating member, subject to the jurisdiction of the same court with the appellant, shall be appointed to defend the sentence, and shall be the appellee in the case. The object of this curious provision evidently is to sustain symmetrically the theory which is carried out in the rest of the Revised Discipline, that when any appeal or complaint is taken up, the court appealed from has no longer any other relation to the case than that shared by all others represented in the superior court. But when a judicatory prosecutes on common fame, through the agency of its “prosecuting committee,” or when it pronounces sentence in one of these anomalous “cases without process,” it is virtually a party in point of fact. On one side is the condemned man, and on the other side is the court condemning, and there is nobody else in the affair. The problem, then, was how to avoid having the court appear as a party to the appeal in such cases as these. It is strange that the committee did not see that their expedient is either a mere fiction, or else that it still leaves the lower court in the virtual position of appellee in the case. When they have picked up this *anybody* to appear in the higher court, defend their sentence, and play the *role* of party to the appeal, does he not appear as their representative or counsel? Then they are themselves virtually present as a party *per alium, non per se*. If not, where is the propriety of making this individual a party to the case, when, in fact he is no more a party than any other communicant in the church? In whose behoof does he appear? Not in his own, surely, for personally he has no more business there than anybody else; if he appears properly at all, it must be as counsel for the court appealed from. He is to “defend the sentence;” that is, *their sentence*. In doing this he defends them; so that, after all, the court appealed from appears, by their counsel, as defendant,

that is, as appellee, to answer the appeal. We beg the reader to believe that this is not a "mere strife about words," as we shall see when we come to the chapter on "General Review and Control."

The concluding section of this new chapter contains a proposition so startling and dangerous that we confess the two points just criticised seem to us in comparison almost trivial. It says, "In cases in which a communicating member of the church shall state in open court that he is persuaded in conscience that he is not converted, and has no right to come to the table of the Lord, and desires to withdraw from the communion of the church; if he has committed no offence which requires process, his name shall be stricken from the roll of communicants, and the fact, if deemed expedient, published in the congregation of which he is a member."

The attempt has been made several times in General Assemblies—as in 1848 and 1851—to establish this most sweeping, mischievous and un-Presbyterian usage, which it is here proposed to legalize. It has been argued that discipline cannot be the proper means for getting such a member out of the church, because there is no "offence" for which to discipline him; that if this unregenerate church member were to come to the communion, while conscious that he had not the preparation of heart, he would be guilty of hypocrisy and profanity, and we may not discipline, that is, *punish* a person for not doing that which would have been a heinous sin if done; that the candor and honor of such persons, in resigning a name which they feel themselves unworthy to wear, deserves praise rather than censure; that many young persons are hurried into the church in times of religious excitement, by imprudence of Christian friends, or even church officers, and by their own inexperience, and these ought not now to be punished by an odious brand of church discipline for an indiscretion involuntary and mainly due to others.

Such are the arguments which have been plausibly and eloquently urged more than once on the floor of the Assembly. Let it be remembered, also, that the same respected brother who acted as chairman of this committee of revision, when chairman of the Assembly's Committee of Bills and Overtures, in 1848, advised the Assembly to adopt the same principle which has

committee has now sought to embody in our Revised Discipline. The Assembly then refused to follow his advice; we devoutly hope that it will do so again. We recall this, not to cause *odium*, but as a piece of history, instructive and appropriate in the premises.

But when we return to the *Princeton Review*, we are—we must be pardoned for saying it—amazed, both at the arguments advanced and the *slightness* with which so important and extensive a revolution is dismissed. The discussion occupies *nine lines*, and is composed of the following reasons: that “hundreds of such cases are occurring from year to year,” as though a bad practice ought to repeal a good rule, instead of the good rule’s abolishing the bad practice; “that no man should be coerced to violate his conscience;” and that “the church is so far a voluntary society that no one can be required to remain in it against his will”—remarks which would have some relevancy, if it was proposed that church sessions should coerce a man to commune when he knew himself unfit; whereas, the duty enjoined is *to become fit* by obeying the great command to believe—and if church sessions wielded for this purpose civil pains and penalties, instead of merely spiritual means; and that “he should not be visited with ecclesiastical censure simply for believing that he is not prepared to come to the Lord’s table”—a statement which we will correct in due time.

On the other hand, it has been solidly argued in the Assembly, that church membership is an enlistment for life, and should be an indissoluble tie; that this permission to throw off the bond at pleasure would teach most low and ruinous conceptions of the nature of the church, and the sacredness of the union to her, as though it were little more than a debating society or Odd Fellows’ club; that the proposed policy places the Presbyterian Church on the same level as the Methodist, in opening a wide “back-door” for the escape of those loose and heterogeneous accessions which the genius of Methodism approves, whereas our institutions repudiate them; that the person desiring dismissal to the world might be mistaken in condemning his own spiritual state, because of melancholy or Satanic temptation, as many humble Christians have been; and that if the consequences of entering the communion of the church unconverted seem mortifying to his pride, that false step was his own, and no one else can so

justly be held responsible for it. But these reasons, while just, do not display the full force of the objections. We argue farther:

First, That this permission once granted to church sessions in form, there will be nearly an utter end of church discipline. Backsliding members, who have just committed some disciplinable offence, will come to the church session before the rumor of their wickedness has become flagrant, state, with a gentlemanly *nonchalance*, that they have concluded they were mistaken as to their conversion, and demand to be instantly "*marked off*." Oftentimes others, who are conscious of a growing love for sin and purpose to yield to temptation, will take the same step in advance, by way of preparation, and thus we shall have the holy and glorious kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ degraded almost to the level of one of those vain temperance societies, which unprincipled men join in the summer, and from which they remove their names in December, preliminary to their "Christmas spree." In many cases transgressors will be allowed to evade discipline in this way, even after their offences have become quite flagrant, for discipline is painful and invidious work; and those who know church sessions know that they will often yield to this strong reluctance, and get rid of the troublesome member in this short hand way. They will be able to say, "Well, the man demanded leave to withdraw, and our Revised Discipline makes it obligatory on us to grant it, where the member says he has no new heart. We did indeed know that there were some rumors of immorality, but we had not such authentic evidence as would justify the commencing of process in due form; under these circumstances we did not feel authorized to refuse his demand, and now he is out of our power." Let this article be made the public law of our church, and we fearlessly predict that in due time the righteous and sacred fear of the rod of discipline will be unknown among us, except in rare cases. In all conscience it is rare enough now, without this new door for laxity.

But secondly, We utterly deny the position on which the whole plausibility of the opposing argument rests, that there is no "offence" for which to discipline such a moral, candid person, confessing his unregenerate state. What, is there no sin when he is disobeying that command, "This do in remembrance

of me?" It is forgotten that this person's disqualification for communing is not an involuntary, physical disqualification. Men speak of it as though it were something like a broken leg, or a chain, which kept them away from the Lord's table. But whose fault is it that the unconverted member has not the proper state of heart to approach that sacrament? Whose but his own? Said Christ, "*And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.*" That the person has not the proper affections to come is his sin, his great parent sin. And shall one sin be pleaded as justification for another sin? If a man commit the crime of brutifying himself with ardent spirits, shall he plead that sin as apology for the second crime of doing some brutal act while in that state? Both human and divine laws say, no!

Is there, then, no sin which is disciplinable, because there is no overt immorality, when the man has himself confessed the great, the damning sins of being unwilling to believe and trust Christ, thus making God a liar (1 John v. 10); of feeling no gratitude and love to a lovely, dying Saviour, which is equivalent to a profession of ingratitude and indifference; and of entertaining no desire whatever to be released by Christ from his depravity and rebellion, which is the same thing as saying that he would rather be depraved and a rebel than not? But these feelings of trust, gratitude, love, desire for holiness, are just the feelings which would fit him to commune; the absence of them is voluntary and active wickedness towards God. Shall the Book of Discipline teach that unbelief and enmity to Christ are not sins? Not so teach the Scriptures. They say that unbelief is the sin because of which sinners are condemned already by God (John iii. 18); that when the Holy Ghost comes to the heart, he convinces it of sin, because it has not believed on Christ. (John xvi. 9.) This, then, is the great mother sin, "the head and front of our offending." But perhaps the ground may be taken, that while unbelief, absence of love to Christ, impenitency, are sins, even great sins, they are not of the class of *disciplinable offences*, but, like various Christian imperfections, ought to be dealt with only from the pulpit and in other teachings. We reply, that the church judges it proper to *keep out* from her communion a whole world of professed transgressors for this very sin; it were strange if the same sin inside her pale cannot be properly punished by *putting out* the transgressor. The *Prince-*

ton Review, in introducing the Revised Discipline to notice, states and defends, with eminent propriety, the distinction between sins which are not and sins which are *disciplinable offences* for a church court. In this sense, as it teaches, all sins are not "offences;" and it sums up by saying: "It is only those evils in the faith or practice of a church member which bring disgrace or scandal on the church, as tolerating what the Bible declares to be incompatible with the Christian character, which can be ground of process." Are not avowed impenitence and unbelief incompatible with Christian character, and does not their tolerance in communicants "bring disgrace or scandal" on the Romish and other communions, which formally allow it, in the eyes of all enlightened men? They are, then, a disciplinable offence. But hear Paul (1 Cor. xvi. 22), "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." Here we have the very formulary of excommunication pronounced, and it is against the man who "loves not the Lord Jesus Christ;" that is, just the man who, in modern phrase, avows himself as "lacking in the suitable qualifications for the Lord's supper."

The church, we hold, is solemnly bound to teach the same doctrine in her discipline which she preaches from her pulpits, otherwise she is an unscriptural church. She is bound to testify by her acts, as well as her words, against that destructive and wicked delusion so prevalent in consequence of the wresting of the doctrines of grace, that because grace is sovereign, therefore the failure to exercise gracious principles is rather man's misfortune than his fault. It is this dire delusion which hides from men the sinfulness of their hearts; it hath slain its ten thousands. With what consistency can the pulpit proclaim that unbelief is sin, and then send forth the same pastor into the session room to declare to the misguided transgressor, in the tenfold more impressive language of official acts, that it involves no censure, and that its bold avowal is rather creditable than blameworthy? Shall not the blood of souls be found on such a session?

Now, it is true that to make a hypocritical commemoration of the Lord's death, without either faith or repentance, is a greater crime than the open avowal of the sin of unbelief. But this is far from proving the latter no sin. We grant that he who candidly owns the wicked state of his heart, and refuses to perform

a hypocritical deed, acts far less criminally than he who simulates love and faith while feeling none, and "eats and drinks damnation to himself;" but this is far from granting that he does rightly. By his own showing he is candid in avoiding pretence, but he is also disobedient and unthankful. He is not a secret traitor, but he wishes to be an open, armed rebel. He is not indeed a Judas, but he is an unbelieving, hostile Caiaphas. Shall we still be told that we cannot discipline him, because he has done nothing wrong? Here, then, is the scriptural ground on which to judge his case. He is a member of the visible church and under its jurisdiction, probably by the valid act of his parents, and certainly by his own voluntary act. It may be he acted heedlessly, indiscreetly, in subjecting himself, yet it was his own free act. Let him then be dealt with for the *sin of unbelief*, that great master sin, that parent sin, that sin so purely voluntary, and so decisive of unconverted character. He has avowed it, let him then be treated as a man who confesses a disciplinable offence.

Here it may be objected that whatever the Bible may decide of the voluntariness and sinfulness of unbelief, no unregenerate man thinks thus of it, and therefore the unconverted church member in question, and all other men of the world, will be filled with indignation at what they conceive to be unreasonable punishment, and thus the session will not be upheld by that "approbation of an impartial public" from which their discipline, a power only moral and spiritual, must derive a large part of its force, according to the Book of Government itself. We reply that it is only an evangelical public opinion which is to be regarded by the church with respect. God forbid that the kingdom of Christ, that sacred and majestic commonwealth which is appointed to be, in all ages, the exemplar and defender of immutable righteousness, should become a truckling trimmer to every wicked caprice of unsanctified opinion and prejudice. Let it be hers rather to control, enlighten and elevate public opinion by the consistency and moral courage of her teachings and acts. But we reply again, that in the case under discussion the fact that *discipline* is administered is not at all incompatible with the making of such differences, in the mild and paternal character of the proceedings, as the true character of the case justifies. The session, if it is reasonably prudent, will remem-

ber that the sin of unbelief, in a moral man, implies none of that social degradation which applies to swindling, or falsehood, or unchastity, and they will throughout deal with the unhappy man so as to relieve his feelings from the bitterness of this misapprehension. When they hear that he absents himself from the Lord's table they will indeed cite him. But a *citation* from a pastoral body is not necessarily a peremptory document, denouncing contingent shame and wrath, sent forth to drag the reluctant culprit trembling to their bar. Why may it not be a true citation, and yet say in substance, with pastoral affection, that the session, his true friends, tender and forbearing, see this ground to fear that his soul is not prospering, and therefore, in loving anxiety for him, ask an interview and a candid statement of his feelings? Then, after all proper care to discover that the person is not one of God's feeble lambs, who is writing bitter things against himself because of a morbid conscience or Satanic buffetings, the next step should be to urge on him, with all a pastor's loving fidelity, the gospel offer, to show him how the unfitness of the Lord's table which he has avowed, is his sin, which it is his duty to forsake at once, and from which it is his privilege to be at once delivered by the Saviour, if he will only believe. Then at length, if he persists in declining to accept Christ, he should be solemnly, but tenderly, instructed of his guilt and danger, and the session should do judicially, on the ground of his own avowal, what he had requested, except that they should *debar* him from the Lord's table until repentance, instead of giving him *license to neglect it*. But if the person were amiable and moral, it would be proper to spare his feelings the mortification of publishing his suspension from the pulpit, as the Book of Discipline expressly authorizes judicatories to do. Being informed of the issue himself, he might be left to publish it by his visible absence from the Lord's supper. In no case should a church session proceed against such a case to the extreme of excommunication unless the person inculpated added to his confession of unregeneracy contumacy or crime. As long as his demeanor was moral and respectful to Christianity, he should be only remanded to that condition of religious minority, self-suspended by unbelief from sealing ordinances, in which the Assembly has decided all impenitent baptized persons stand. Some one may say that a judicial process, thus conducted, comes

practically to the same thing with the course recommended in the Revised Discipline. We reply, that it is as truly devoid of unrighteous harshness, but that it has this vast difference and advantage, it is faithful to the Bible theory of the church and of the gospel.

The last remark may suggest a further objection to the provision of the Revised Discipline. It says of the impenitent member, "his name shall be stricken from the roll of communicants." But such applicants would almost universally consider that the transaction made a final end of their church membership, and of the jurisdiction of pastor and session. This, indeed, would usually be their object in making the application. We should be sorry to believe, indeed, that it is the meaning of the committee of revision. Yet surely it is an objection, that this summary dismissal from the communion should be misunderstood by the party himself, as it usually will be, as a *dismissal from the church*. But to what other body can he be dismissed? There is but one other, the kingdom of Satan. The Revised Book itself says that "all baptized persons are church members," and such they must continue until their membership is severed in a legal way. Now, is it right to take this moral person, who, according to the reasonings of those we oppose, has just signalized his candor and his reverential respect for the sacraments in a very pleasing manner, and make this the occasion for giving him up to the jurisdiction of Satan, and of repudiating all that watch and care and pastoral instruction which the church has hitherto exercised towards him? Is it lawful for the church to do this? Does she not neglect her charge therein? While it is lenient in seeming, it is in fact a far greater severity than regular discipline. In a word, the whole conception of church membership, on which the proposition is founded, is incompatible with the Presbyterian theory of the church. It might be in place in the discipline of some society which combined the principles of the Independents and Immersionists.

Chap. VII.—*Of Witnesses*. The only important change in this chapter is the making of the *parties* to a judicial process *competent* witnesses, leaving the degree of their *credibility* to be decided by the judicatory. The other alterations are chiefly those of condensation, and seem to be, in the main, improvements, as when the seventeenth section, Revised Discipline, states, in a

few lines, with sufficient distinctness, the cases in which, and conditions on which, new testimony may be introduced, which in the present book are expanded with unnecessary minuteness into a whole chapter (the ninth). To return to the point first mentioned, several secular judicatories have introduced of late the usage of allowing parties to testify, and with seeming advantage. The old argument against it must be admitted to have some force; that it is too severe a test and temptation to be applied to poor human nature, to bear witness in its own behalf. But, on the other hand, it is urged, with solid force, that it seems very unreasonable in a court to go everywhere else hunting up testimony about a transaction except to the two men who knew all about it, meantime silencing them. Two remarks may be made in confirmation of this: First, that the secular courts of equity, or chancery, in England and America, to which a spiritual court ought surely to approach nearest in the spirit of its jurisprudence, have, in many cases, adopted this principle from time immemorial. The parties at equity file their declarations under oath, because the judge is supposed to allow them some degree of credibility, according to their sincerity, as expositions of the state of facts. It is true that these declarations are popularly supposed to be attended with a good deal of "hard swearing"; but the tendency of self-interest to falsify is powerfully checked by the knowledge of the fact that the other party is also at liberty to introduce all the testimony he can get, and that, if any part of the declaration is proved false by this evidence, the credibility of the whole is damaged.

Secondly: According to our present Book of Discipline, the exclusion of the parties from the witness-stand may sometimes most unreasonably defeat justice, when one of the witnesses is compelled to testify; for in some cases a man might thus be compelled to act as accuser, so that only one other is left to testify, while the Book requires two. It seems to us improper, however, to make it the uniform law that all parties shall be compelled to testify against themselves, an abuse repudiated by all liberal legislation. The fifteenth section—in present Book sixteenth—provides that a church member summoned to testify may be censured for his refusal to obey. It would be well to introduce a clause, here or elsewhere, excepting persons appearing as defendants in a cause from this censure for refusing to testify. Otherwise misunderstanding may arise.

Chap. VIII.—We come now to the eighth chapter, corresponding with chapter seventh in our present Book, which treats of the review and appellate jurisdiction of superior judicatories over inferior. Here we find some important and questionable modifications proposed. As to their importance, we may adopt the estimate of the *Princeton Review*, which, in defending them, says: If the third section of this chapter “should be ultimately adopted, it matters comparatively little what becomes of the rest of their recommendations.” In the present Book, and the new one, this chapter begins with two prefatory paragraphs; to these the committee propose to add a third, as follows:

“When a matter is transferred in any of these ways from an inferior to a superior judicatory, the inferior judicatory shall in no case be considered a party, nor shall its members lose their right to sit, deliberate and vote in the higher courts.”

This seventh chapter of our present Book of Discipline has been the most common butt of the complaints against our system. Many strong and eloquent pictures have been drawn, as in the *Princeton Review*, p. 717, of the confusions which often arise from appeal cases, of the tedious investigations, complicated questions of order, waste of time in the General Assembly, and extrusion of business of more general importance. We are thoroughly convinced that the hope of finding a remedy for this evil in the present, or indeed in any revision of our Book, will be found wholly delusive. That evil is due to the popular constitution, and large numbers of our higher judicatories, and to their inexperience of judicial transactions, not to the defective provisions of our statute book. That book is the work of our wisest men, has been already perfected by repeated revisions, the last of which was performed by a committee embracing Drs. Alexander and Miller, and which labored upon it, not *four or five days*, but parts of *three years*, and is probably as wise as it can be made. The true remedy is probably to be found in an amendment of our Book of Government, constitutionally admitting compact judicial commissions in our higher, or at least our highest courts. But much of the evil is inevitable. *We are yet to find the place or the court where judicial investigations are not tedious, laborious and intricate*, unless where a summary tyranny cuts matters short by disregarding rights and running a fearful risk of injustice. But we proceed to remark:

In some cases, at least, the inferior judicatory *is* and *must be* a party before the superior, when appealed from; and in every case it assumes necessarily so much of an interested attitude as to make it unfit to sit, deliberate and vote, in the courts above to which the appeal is taken. Suppose the new chapter concerning "cases without process" adopted; and suppose an appeal or complaint taken against such a sentence; or suppose an appeal from a conviction on "common fame," who, we pray, is the "other party," unless it is the judicatory pronouncing the sentence? There is no accuser; or, if the prosecution is on "common fame," the accuser is imaginary; the real accuser is the prosecuting committee, which is nothing at all except as it is the representative of the judicatory that appoints it. There is *nobody* in the case at all except the defendant and the judicatory; and as there are presumed to be two parties, the latter *must be* one. We have already seen the thin evasion by which this obvious truth is attempted to be hidden. The Revised Discipline provides that in these classes of cases, if there is an appeal, the judicatory shall appoint somebody to play the part of "appellee;" but we trust it was made plain, that either this fictitious "appellee" must appear as the representative of the lower court before the higher, or his appearance is wholly absurd. But if the former view is true, then the court appealed from is, in reality, a party to the appeal, and appears by its counsel.

The very conception of an appeal or complaint makes the court below, to a certain extent, a party. When the individual who was cast appeals or complains, *against whom*, we pray, does he appeal or complain? Not, surely, against the accuser, where there is a personal accuser. The complaint is *against the judicatory which cast him*; as, he conceives, unjustly. And when his appeal or complaint is "entertained" by the higher court, what is the thing which is investigated? Is it not the *sentence passed below*? The body appealed from or complained against, the body whose that sentence was, is surely then a party to the question. This follows inevitably from the nature of an appeal or complaint. If we inquire what is the object of the appellant, the nature of the process appears yet more strongly. The whole motive of his process is to remove his cause to the jurisdiction of *other judges*. He considers the judges of the lower court as incompetent, unfair or prejudiced, to some extent,

and therefore he appeals to the other judges in order that he may avoid the injustice which he conceives himself as suffering in that lower. Now, what a mockery is it to appoint him in part, perhaps in large part, the same old judges. It is an intrinsic absurdity in the view of common sense. Nor is it relieved by the feature which distinguished Luther's course, when he appealed from his holiness the pope *ill-informed* to his holiness the pope *well-informed*. For, according to the provision of the Revised Discipline, as well as the old, these judges judging the appeal against themselves are not conceived of as any better informed; they are forbidden to take into the account, at the second hearing, anything additional to the first record. Once more, let us suppose a case cited by the *Princeton Review* itself, for an opposite purpose, indeed: "A session finds a man guilty. The Presbytery reverses that decision. The session appeals to Synod. Here the session and the Presbytery are the parties. The Synod may reverse the judgment of the Presbytery. Then the Presbytery appeals, and the Synod and Presbytery become the parties before the Assembly." This, objects the author, would be the case under the present Book. But how can it be otherwise, in fact, we ask, under any book? When the session appeals against the Presbytery which has reversed its sentence, against whom is its quarrel waged on the floor of the Synod? Against the Presbytery. This is inevitable. And if the Presbytery appoints some "appellee" to answer the session's appeal, he answers it *in the Presbytery's defence*. This is the fact, blink it as we may by a fictitious arrangement.

The *Princeton Review* presents four arguments against the present Book, where it treats the court appealed from as a party to a limited extent before the court above, and excludes them from a vote on the readjudication. In briefly discussing these few heads, we shall be able to present the remainder of what we have to say with sufficient method.

First, It is urged that it is very unfair and unjust to assume, as our present Book does, that a judge must become a partizan by sitting upon a cause; and secondly, that his having judged it once does not disqualify him, but rather prepare him better for sitting on it again. If our present Book, we reply, assumed that Presbyterian ruling elders and ministers are usually so wicked that they would sit the second time with hearts con-

sciously and sinfully prejudiced to reject all amendment of their verdict, though seen by themselves to be wrong, this would be very harsh. But what the Book assumes is this obvious truth, that good men are infirm, liable to unconscious prejudice and pride of opinion; and, for whatever reason they may have decided once, in a given way, liable *for that reason*, to decide the same way a second time when the case is presented on the very same *data* as at first. But the nature of the appeal, in the Revised Discipline, just as in the old, necessarily requires that nothing shall be admitted into the discussion but what is in the record of the lower court. If any man denies this as a true description of human nature, or as too derogatory, he will find very few practical men concurring with him. But again: the very nature of the appeal is, that the party cast desires a new trial *by other judges*. In securing the right of appeal the constitution grants this desire. See the first paragraph of the chapter, in either the present or revised form. The constitution, therefore, excludes the lower court from sitting again, not because it would brand them as prejudiced partizans, but because the defendant has asked for *new judges*, and the constitution has determined to gratify him.

In the third place, the *Princeton Review* urges that the usage of our present discipline is, in this respect, contrary to that of most secular courts in our country. It is said that, in no secular court of appeal are the judges of the lower court "arraigned before the higher court, and made to defend themselves for having given a certain judgment." And the appeal, it is asserted, is "often reheard by the same judges associated with others." Of the latter assertion, we remark first, that in the courts of appeals in most commonwealths, and in the courts to which the most of the interests of citizens are referred, the judges of the lower courts appealed from have no seat at all. In some at least of the United States, the judge of the circuit courts of law is *expressly forbidden* to sit on the hearing of an appeal from his decision, in the District Court of Appeals, which is composed, for the rest, of circuit judges. Different and superior judges, in the majority of cases, wholly compose the higher court. This is the rule; the opposite is the exception. Again: in the exceptional cases in which judges assemble from their circuits into a general court, to hear

appeals from one or another of their own body, the court appealed from forms an exceedingly small part of the superior court appealed to. As the *Princeton Review* remarks, rather suicidally: "Often the appeal is from a single judge to a full bench;" so that the vote of the judge who has already adjudicated the case forms a very small and comparatively unimportant element in the second decision. But, after all, in nearly all civil courts of law and equity it is a *jury*, and not the judge, that decides upon the issue made up in the case. Let us run the parallel fairly, and we shall make the moderator of the judicatory correspond to the judge in the secular court, while all the other members of the judicatory correspond to the jury. Who would ever dream, in any civil court in America, of suffering the same *jurymen* to sit in the new trial of a case? When a new trial is granted, if there is no change of *venue*, at least a totally new jury is impanelled. Not one of the old jury is allowed to sit. The judge may be assumed to be dispassionate, for he has been the mere umpire of the debate, he has not passed on the issue at all. Again, when a jury is formed to try a man accused of crime, each man of the *venue* is questioned solemnly whether he has formed *and expressed* an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the accused. If he declares that he has, he is dismissed. The law assumes, most properly, that human nature is such that the mere expression of an opinion, much more its deliberate utterance after full examination, creates at once some bar, unconsciously, yet truly, to the equal admission into the mind of lights for and lights against the conclusion formed. But the judicial function is a sacred one, and, therefore, perfect *dispassionateness* is the essential qualification of all who sit as judges. From all these facts we argue that the usage of civil courts is against the *Princeton Review*, and that, in the general, it expresses the obvious principle of common sense, that an appeal should not go to the same judges. But now note, that in every case, according to our Book of Government, the lower court is represented in the court next above, and in most cases largely represented. Here, then, is the overwhelming, the decisive answer to this whole doctrine of the Revised Discipline, that it is every way probable the lower court appealed from would, in many cases, have a controlling majority in the court appealed to, so that, if they were allowed to sit, the right of appeal would be virtually

disappointed, the case would be re-adjudicated by the same votes. The author in the *Princeton Review*, with a singular fatality for adducing instances destructive to his own argument, has, on page 710, supplied us with just such a case. We complete his statement a little, so as to make the following supposition: There is a Synod composed of one large and two or three small Presbyteries. In the large Presbytery a case of discipline is adjudicated, and the party cast appeals to Synod. The meeting of Synod either takes place within the bounds of this large Presbytery or else the interest of its members in this litigation carries the bulk of them to the Synod. A Synod's quorum *may* be constituted of three members from one Presbytery, three from a second, and one from a third. Suppose in this case three from the second, one from the third, and quite a full representation from the large Presbytery; instead of only the minimum of three. Where now is the appellant's new trial? It is substantially the same court; the same majority which has already condemned him is still overwhelming. Let us suppose another case. There is a small Presbytery of few and scattered churches. An appeal goes up against the session of one of its more important churches. The moderator and delegate of that session sit in Presbytery, and though there is a constitutional quorum, the only other members may be two ministers, of whom one is moderator, so that the vote in the upper court is two against one. "If the pastor and elder were required to withdraw, no quorum would be left!" True; but the injustice of this mockery of an issue to the appeal would at least be arrested and suspended. It has long been the glory of our republican church discipline that it gives the best possible guarantees to protect its humblest member against injustice. Our intelligent laity will naturally regard this feature of the Revised Book as an infringement of their rights, and as the introduction of a new element of power, anti-republican in its nature. Is it so that the minister or layman who conceives himself as unjustly condemned by a Presbytery is to be deprived of that privilege of a freeman, carrying his rights before different judges, and that this Presbytery shall still, in part, be his masters to the end, whether he consents or not?

To the plea that no civil court of review arraigns the inferior judge appealed from before it to defend the sentence he had

pronounced, we reply: Neither does our present Book "*arraign*" the lower court before the upper, or treat it as "*on trial*" in the same sense with the culprit it has convicted. This is an exaggerated statement of the case. The upper court does what common sense requires; it extends to the lower court, which has already examined the case, the courtesy and the right of explaining and enforcing its grounds of decision, before the final judgment is pronounced which is to affirm or reverse it. Only to this extent is the lower court "a party." So obvious is the reasonableness of this courtesy, that we presume in those civil courts where "the appeal is from a single judge to a full bench," that judge is, as a matter of politeness, if not of established usage, invited to explain his decision before his brethren vote. But more: the authority of church courts is only spiritual. The only sanctions they administer are moral, and their force is chiefly dependent on the confidence and approval of a sanctified public opinion. The circuit judge of law cares comparatively little whether his judicial accuracy be often discredited by the adverse decisions of a court of appeals, for he has the strong arm of force, the terrors of jails, whipping-posts and sheriffs, to enforce his authority. But the church court has nothing but the moral support of public opinion. How much more important, then, that the decisions of a lower court should be closely scanned, and yet not rashly discredited by the reversals of a higher court? Its reputation for fairness is a sensitive and precious thing. More than dollars and cents is concerned in it, even the honor of Christ and his cause; hence the high propriety of allowing the court appealed from to justify their decision to their brethren before they pronounce on the case. This right and privilege the Revised Discipline proposes to abolish. Again, according to our present Discipline, the reversal of the higher court *may* imply censure on the lower court. (Chap. VII., Secs. 3, 13.) Nobody will dispute that, if this provision is to stand, the court appealed from *must* be allowed to appear as a party to this extent; *i. e.*, to defend their own decision before the appeal is "issued." It would be wickedness to refuse it, for it would be judging men unheard. The committee of revision have, indeed, expunged this section, in their zeal to propagate the pet idea that the lower court is in no sense a party when appealed from; but in doing so they have exceedingly erred. For all agree in assert-

ing the general principle of *the responsibility of a part to the whole*. See this admirably expounded as one of the essential features of Presbyterianism, in Dr. Hodge's discourse on the church before the Presbyterian Historical Society. To deny this is to repudiate Presbyterianism. The superior court may not resign the right and duty of censuring the unjust sentence of the inferior court, if it deserves censure. Now, we beg the reader to note, that the *mode* known to the constitution of our church, in which the higher court judicially reaches a judge sitting in the lower court, to censure him for his unrighteous judicial acts, is through this very chapter on General Review, Control and Appeals. It has been said that a civil court of appeals does not consider the judge below who is appealed from as arraigned before it, to defend the righteousness of his decisions. We reply, No; for a very good reason, that the civil constitution provides a regular mode of *impeachment* before a different tribunal for reaching the unrighteous judge. But in our church government our mode of impeachment is practically to be found in the provisions of General Review, Appeal and Complaint. These are our forms of enforcing judicial responsibility. Hence the appeal or complaint *ought* to bring the sentence from below under a liability to censure, if wrong; and hence again, the lower court *ought* to be first heard in defence of it.

The fourth objection of the *Princeton Review* is, that "the present plan is cumbrous and almost impracticable." A picture is then drawn—which must be acknowledged to be striking, whatever its justice—of an appeal or complaint, commencing in the church session, and going up ultimately to the General Assembly, where at length it appears with the original accuser and respondent, the session, the Presbytery, and the Synod as parties, all in a *general muss* and inextricable confusion. To one who has studied our present Book of Discipline, and is familiar with the legitimate routine of appeal cases in our church courts, this picture so obviously appears as a caricature, that he can scarcely credit the gravity of its limner. If we look into the provisions of our present Book, we find that, in defining the order of proceedings for issuing an appeal or complaint, and in all other places, the *judicatory* appealed or complained against is ever mentioned in the singular number. Nowhere is there one word to indicate that any parties appear before the superior

court, except the two original parties and the lower court from which the appeal immediately comes. The result is the same if we search legitimate precedents. There is not a case in Baird's *Digest* where courts appealed from ever appeared thus in the Assembly "two or three deep." On the contrary, page 138, in the case of Abby Hanna, in 1844, we have the very case predicted by the reviewer, an appeal came all the way from the church session, through Presbytery and Synod, to the Assembly. Yet, while the Assembly had all the proceedings of all the subordinate courts read, only the Synod appeared at the fifth step of the proceedings to justify its sentence. The General Assembly entertained the appeal only as from the Synod; the sentence of that body alone was before it immediately; the proceedings below were only read for the history of the case. If a superior court has ever acted otherwise, it was only from comity, or by license, not because of any demand of our Book.

Let us note here, also, that the supposed necessity for this change, in order to clear up the doubt about the "original parties," is wholly imaginary. That doubt arises among us again and again, not because the Assembly has not repeatedly cleared it up in the most perspicuous manner, by precedent after precedent, decision after decision; not because the language of the Book itself is ambiguous, but only because, in large and inexperienced judicatories, there always are, and always will be, so many members who are heedless, forgetful, or inattentive to the proper sources of information. If the reader will consult Baird, pp. 138, 139, he will find that the editor has correctly deduced from the precedents of the Assembly the following principles, which cover all imaginable questions as to who are "the original parties."

"There may be

"A responsible *prosecutor* and the *defendant*.

"A prosecuting *committee* and the *defendant*.

"Upon a *fama clamosa* case, the *court* may itself, without prosecutor or committee, conduct process against the *accused*.

"A *subordinate court* under grievance may enter complaint against a *superior court*.

"A *minority* or *others* may complain against the action of a *court*.

"A process may be conducted by *one court* against *another*."

"Whatever aspect the case may afterwards assume, at every stage of its process to final adjudication before the highest court, the parties above specified are the original parties in the cases severally. *Minutes, passim.*"

The *Princeton Review* has waxed so emphatic as to style the complications which it describes as "this Upas tree;" an appellation at which we fear the dignity of that respectable old rhetorical fiction will be somewhat hurt, as being scarcely a *nodus vin-dice dignus*. But we suggest that a moderate attention to these precedents already existing, and collected so conveniently for use by Mr. Baird, would have been sufficient to cut down the tree, or even to "eradicate it, root and branch," without making such extensive havoc among our good old laws in the effort to come at it.

Chap. VIII., Sec. 3.—This section treats, as in the present Book of Discipline, of the management and effect of appeals. All the modifications of any moment proposed by the committee in this particular are indicated in the first paragraph. In place of the present definition, which describes an appeal as "the removal of a cause already decided from an inferior to a superior judicatory by a party aggrieved," the Revised Book begins thus:

"I. An appeal is the removal of a case already decided from an inferior to a superior judicatory, the peculiar effect of which is to arrest all proceedings under the decision until the matter is finally decided in the last court. It is allowable in two classes of cases: 1st, In all judicial cases, by the party to the cause against whom the decision is made; 2nd, In all other cases when the action or decision of the judicatory has inflicted an injury or wrong upon any party or persons, he or they may appeal; and when said decision or action, though not inflicting any personal injury or wrong, may nevertheless inflict directly, or by its consequences, great general injury, any minority of the judicatory may appeal."

The reader will bear in mind that a complaint, which is allowed by the present Book to any one who disapproves of any of that class of decisions described under the second of the above heads, does not suspend immediately the operation of the decision complained against, while an appeal does. The practical question, therefore, is, Should we grant the privilege

of arresting the operation of such decisions as would come under the second head, while the recourse is had to the superior judicatory? The first remark we make hereupon is, that the *Princeton Review* states the history of this question in a manner calculated to prejudice its fair solution. It says, "A cloud of obscurity rests on the present Book, both as to the cases in which an appeal is allowable, and as to the persons authorized to appeal." It then proceeds to state that the uniform usage of the Scotch Church, and of our own, for the first hundred years, together with *the necessity of the case*, had admitted appeals to lie in other than judicial cases; but that at length differences of opinion had arisen, and *in one case* the Assembly had decided that appeals can only lie in judicial cases, deciding therein contrary to *all* usage and necessity. Now, the simple statement with regard to what is represented as this one false step of the Assembly is the following: various and contradictory opinions and usage prevailed in our inferior judicatories on this point. In 1839 the sense of the Assembly was definitely sought on this point by a complaint from a lower judicatory; and it was decided by the Assembly that an appeal can only lie in judicial cases, while in all other kinds of decisions the complaint is the proper proceeding. On this principle the Assembly has uniformly and consistently acted ever since in a number of cases, as well as all other law-abiding judicatories in our church. This, then, is the *one case* in which the *Princeton Review* considers the Assembly blundered. It has blundered on in the same way, with marvellous persistency, for nineteen years. Let the reader remember that as our Book of Discipline stood prior to 1820, no distinction whatever was indicated by it between appeals and complaints. The great men who then revised it introduced new and discriminative language on this subject—why? unless they intended to establish a distinction—but the confused usage which had been prevailing for two generations retarded the clear practical establishment of the distinction till 1839. Then the attention of the Assembly being invoked, it spoke out in terms so unambiguous that the usage has been uniform ever since. So that, in fact, instead of having "one case" "against *all usage*," we have nineteen years of usage on each side. It is true that the *Princeton Review* did strenuously oppose the Assembly's de-

cision; but we suppose any one will hardly deny to the Assembly the right of settling legal precedents to please itself.

The Assembly, then, for nineteen years at least, has not thought that any cloud of obscurity rests on the present Book on this point. To all, at least, who regard the Assembly's precedents as of force, the meaning of the Book is clear enough. As to an obvious "necessity" for granting appeals in other cases than judicial trials, the Assembly evidently does not consider that it exists; that is, it is not a necessity founded on natural right, that anybody shall have the power of arresting the effect of any decision whatever for so long a time as a litigious spirit can protract an appeal in its passage through all the higher courts. This claim, now dignified with the name of a moral necessity, the Assembly intended most explicitly to refuse. It has been urged that it would be a sorry remedy for the man condemned to be hung to review his sentence and declare it erroneous after he had been executed; and so, that decisions not judicial may result in irreparable wrong, unless the party injured be allowed to arrest their operation by an appeal, while a higher body examines their justice; because, if allowed to go into force at all, they may produce effects which their reversal cannot repair. We reply, to give to any or every litigious person the power to tie up any or every decision by an appeal would much more surely work irreparable mischief. The chariot wheels of the church might be perpetually scotched. No human institution can be made to work so perfectly as to render any resultant wrong impossible. All that the wise legislator hopes, or attempts, is to study the *juste milieu*, by which the probabilities of wrong and loss on either hand may be most probably reduced to their *minimum*. Our Book, to protect our rights as well as possible, has given us some form of recourse to the highest court, against any and every decision by which we may conceive ourselves or the church injured. To allow us to take this recourse against every sort of decision, in such a form as would arrest its operation for a whole year, might fatally hamper and embarrass important action. On the other hand, there are some decisions of such a nature that, unless they can be held in suspense, their reversal would be a very imperfect remedy of the injustice. The Book, therefore, decides most wisely, that the forms of recourse shall be such that judicial de-

cisions shall be thus arrested, with three exceptions (Section 15). But judicial decisions are just those in which personal right and church franchise are concerned. No man's membership, office, or fair standing, can be touched without trial; and if he chooses to appeal, they cannot be definitively injured till his appeal is heard. But these are all the perfect rights which he possesses as a church member. It is therefore proper that the privilege of arresting the decision should cover these, and no others. It has been urged, on the other side, that a pastoral relation might, for instance, be unjustly dissolved; that in spite of a complaint from the pastor, the pulpit might be declared vacant, and another pastor installed, thus rendering the mischief irreparable. We accept the instance; we reply, that it is not a personal franchise of an individual to labor in one particular charge rather than another, contrary to the discretion of the Presbytery to whom the constitution commits the oversight of that charge.

Again, we must repose some confidence in the wisdom and justice of the lower courts. Brethren argue for this power in individuals to arrest all their decisions, till a higher court is invoked, as though there was no trust to be placed in them. We assert that, so far from being too rash or harsh, they are almost uniformly too forbearing and considerate, and that the chances of wrong involved in this power are exceedingly small.

And lastly, the most obvious exception may be taken to the generality of the terms in which the Revised Discipline defines the right of appeal. First, in any judicial case the party who is cast may appeal. Next, any party or person who considers himself as directly injured by any kind of decision may appeal. And last, when a minority of a judicatory conceive that any sort of decision causes great general injury, either directly or by its consequences, although it does not in the least injure them, they may appeal. And every such decision is then tied up, often to the irreparable loss of the church, until it is reheard by one, two or three higher courts. We beg the reader to remember that the effect of the appeal is peremptory. The appellant, and not the judicatory appealed from, is practically the judge of the question whether the appeal is proper, and should lie until the higher court to which the appeal is taken entertains it. To decide that the injury done is not such as to justify an

appeal, is the prerogative, not of the court appealed from, but of the court appealed to; and this of necessity, for unless we give this power to an appeal, it would be a remedy wholly futile. The court appealed from might say, "We do not consider this a proper case for appeal," which would be equivalent to giving them the power of saying to the aggrieved party, "You shall not appeal." The lower court must therefore bow to the force of the appeal, and submissively stand in abeyance till the higher court has spoken. Let the exceeding vagueness of the terms in the Revised Discipline be considered, together with their vast comprehension, and the reader will see that practically a completely indefinite extension is given to the right of appeal: "*Any body* may appeal from *any thing* which *any church court* may decide." Such should have been the words of the article, for then we should least at have had perspicuity. But we foresee that the interpretation of the limits to the right of appeal, as drawn by the Revised Discipline, will produce more confusion and debate than all the mooted points together which remain to be adjudicated by the Assembly in the present Book. Here, indeed, are "clouds of obscurity," more portentous, bigger with the muttering thunder of tiresome speeches and noisy difference than any which brood over the other.

The remainder of the Book of Discipline has received at the hand of the committee few alterations, and they are either minute or of a beneficial character. We propose, therefore, to detain the attention of the reader no longer than to apologize for the demands already made on his patience, and to close by invoking the serious attention of Presbyterians, and especially of the officers of the church, to the subject. It is high time that they were carefully examining the proposed changes. If they are as unsatisfactory to the majority of our brethren as they are to us, they had better be arrested in the General Assembly. Their recommendation by the Assembly to the Presbyteries will only prolong the discussion, and at the same time embarrass it, by giving a new element of factitious strength to the new articles. If, indeed, they are strong in the preference and approbation of the majority of Presbyterians, as we devoutly hope they are not, then it is proper that they should be recommended and adopted. But until that fact is fairly evinced by the final decision, candid discussion is the right and duty of all

interested. Let us again express, in concluding, the unshaken confidence we entertain in the fidelity and integrity of the committee. If any word that has been written seems to indicate aught else than a respectful and modest, though sometimes decided, difference of opinion, it is our wish that it had never been written, and that we could detect it to erase it. The course of the discussion has inevitably led us into frequent notice of the reasonings which the *Princeton Review* advances in favor of the Revised Discipline. While candor has compelled us frequently to dissent from the arguments, it also demands our cordial tribute to the dignified, amiable and Christian spirit in which that article was written. If, in these respects, we have not succeeded in imitating it, we must acknowledge that failure as our error and misfortune.

THE REVISED BOOK OF DISCIPLINE.¹

THE readers of the *Presbyterian*, we presume, are familiar with the history of this document; which is the report of a committee of the General Assembly, presenting for discussion various changes in our Book of Discipline. The committee published their report to the churches in August, 1858, and laid it before the Assembly in May, 1859. The Assembly re-committed it to the same committee, in order that they might adopt any amendments which their own judgment might suggest, and that it might be considered generally by Presbyterians before the Assembly of 1860, at which time it is to be reported back for some decisive action. Occasional discussion has taken place concerning it in newspapers and reviews, and now the October number of the *Southern Presbyterian Review* presents us with a thorough article over the signature of Dr. Thornwell, the able chairman of the Assembly's committee, in which the principles of the Revised Book are stated and defended at length, with all the author's customary force of language and ingenuity of thought. The church is entitled to take this as an authoritative expression of the committee's views, to a certain extent, and as a formal and definite statement of the grounds on which the proposed changes are to be defended and advocated. For this reason, we desire to invite the attention of all Presbyterians to a part of its views. In doing so, we would adopt the expressions of sincere respect for the members of the committee and its chairman, which have been uttered by other debaters of this matter. And we would claim that the similar admissions of sincerity and public-spirited motives should be made to all courteous critics of the Revised Book, which have been unanimously accorded to its authors. When a committee report their work to the judicatory which employs them, that work ceases to be a private and personal concern to them.

¹ The above appeared in a series of articles in the "*Presbyterian*," Philadelphia, December 1859-January 1860, in reply to the arguments of Rev. Dr. Thornwell.

It is the property of the public for which the judicatory acts. No personal nor private motives should be allowed to enter into its defence and criticism.

Let it be again premised, that in the propriety of many of the minor changes especially, proposed by the committee, we concur. But our purpose is not to commend the Revised Book, (this the committee is abundantly able to do,) and hence our notices will be limited to such parts of the Book, and of Dr. Thornwell's defence thereof, as seem to us exceptionable. It is not necessary to detain the reader on other points.

I. The Revised Book, in its 5th Chapter, Section 5, gives to church courts what Dr. Thornwell calls the power of "ecclesiastical inquest," (*Review*, page 378), in the following words: "Nevertheless, each church court has the inherent power to demand and receive satisfactory explanations from any of its members concerning any matters of evil report."

This article was objected to by Dr. Van Rensselaer and others as dangerous, invidious, and inquisitorial; and, as we conceive, on very valid grounds. Dr. Thornwell now defends it by asserting such a distinction between secular and spiritual courts as makes the great common-law principles of liberty inapplicable to the latter. He asserts that as every Christian is his brother's keeper, church courts ought to have a power of paternal inquisition; that the wrong-doer ought to be made to criminate himself, for this is the means of repentance, and his repentance is the object of the jurisdiction; that civil courts are for the protection of rights, while spiritual courts are for edification; and that the latter can only *censure*, and not *punish*. Hence, the corollary is, that subjects of spiritual courts ought not to have the right to be held innocent till proved to be guilty, and ought not to complain of being made to criminate themselves. In a word, it is asserted that this power of inquest is founded on the fact that church rulers are the spiritual guardians of the people: the same relation on which the power to institute judicial process rests.

Now, our first remark upon this proposed addition is, that if its principle is right at all, it does not go far enough. Only the *members* of each church court are subjected to this fraternal inquisition. But if it is proper for members of sessions and presbyteries, it is proper to be extended also to the laity. The ar-

ticle should have said: "Each church court has inherent power to demand and receive from *any person subject to its jurisdiction* satisfactory explanations," etc.

The attempt to justify the exercise of such an inquisition by the hand of power, from the fact that each Christian is the guardian of his brother's spiritual state, confounds a very plain distinction. This fraternal oversight, according to the Scriptures, extends only to advice, the receiving or refusing of which must remain a matter of Christian liberty. But the Revised Book proposes to give church courts "power to demand satisfaction" of the unconvicted brother. Here is the infringement of spiritual liberty. We surmise that Presbyterians, a people noted for a wise jealousy concerning their rights, will be very slow to admit the contrast which Dr. Thornwell runs (p. 379) between secular and spiritual courts. They have been accustomed to consider that there are religious rights, such as their right to a good name and standing, their right to membership, sacraments, and franchises in Christ's church, which are as literal as, and more valuable by far, than their rights to their oxen and horses; and that spiritual courts are as truly set for the protection of those rights as juries and sheriffs are for the protection of our cattle and our lands. Dr. Thornwell says "Spiritual courts can censure but not punish; civil courts punish without censuring." True, spiritual courts cannot fine, imprison, and hang; but we surmise Presbyterians will be slow to admit that public reprimand, suspension and excommunication are not punishments. They have all the features of punishments which can justly affect the present discussion; they terminate rights previously enjoyed, and they inflict suffering. This is the obvious distinction; church courts, like pastors, parents and friends, have a pastoral care of their spiritual subjects; but the oversight which they exercise in this function is one of advice and of warning, extending no further than the Christian liberty of their brethren admit it. When once church courts proceed to contravene that voluntary option, their function becomes judicial, and not pastoral; and it should therefore be performed in accordance with judicial principles. Dr. Thornwell intimates a paternal theory of church government, saying: "As a father has a right to interrogate his children in reference to their conduct, so a church court has a right to institute inquiries," etc.

We do not like the sound of this paternal theory of government; it is the favorite pretext of tyranny. The governments of Russia, Austria, and China are "paternal governments," and they treat their subjects like children, with a vengeance. But the theory of Presbyterianism is republican—it makes the rulers the servants, and not the fathers of the people; it gives to the rulers only certain representative powers, delegated to them from the people, for the people's good.

Now, since church judicatories deal with rights, inflict penalties, and do these things in the exercise of delegated power, just like civil magistrates, it is obvious that their powers ought to be limited by the same great principles of natural justice, by which the execution of civil law is guarded. Men ought in church courts to be held innocent, and to possess all the rights of the innocent, till they are proved to be guilty. Men ought not to be *compelled* in church courts to criminate themselves any more than before magistrates. For when this power is granted, the judge or judicatory is thereby empowered to inflict on a man some degrees of those pains due only to those proved guilty, in order to compel confession of a crime which may exist only in the prejudiced imagination of the ruler. It is argued in substance that the guilty man ought to be forced to criminate himself, that is, to confess; for the great object of the church process is to produce repentance, and there can be no repentance without confession. This argument can only be good to one who forgets the old adage, that "catching is before hanging." We grant that after the man is legally proved to be guilty, it is proved that self-crimination, that is confession, is his duty. But to assume that this is his duty, and therefore that he ought to be compelled to do it, is to *assume his guilt*, the very thing which justice forbids the judicatory to assume. Every man is entitled to be treated as innocent till he is proved guilty.

The *Review* reminds us that a church court, in order to decide whether to institute a process against a man, and how to do it, must make some preliminary investigation. We grant it. Then it is asked, "May a court question, if it chooses, every other man in the community touching a rumor, except the only man who is most deeply concerned in it?" We give the obvious answer: The court *may not compel* a response from the accused person, because to assume that he is "concerned in

it," assumes his guilt, the very thing the court is not entitled to assume before it is proved. Suppose the suspected man answers, "I know nothing, because I am guilty of nothing;" and yet the suspicion of his guilt remains fixed in the mind of the judicatory. Then there is no way to enforce the proposed "demand for a satisfactory explanation," except some form of penalty, and then the odious outrage is committed of punishing him on suspicion before he is proved guilty. This simple supposition evinces that this power, proposed to be given by the Revised Discipline, must either be a practical nullity, or else an injustice abhorrent to all right. The only power which can be safely conferred is the power to *invite* disclosures from the suspected brother.

But the attempt is made to find a precedent for this dangerous grant in the powers of the church session, Chap. IX. Sec. 6, of Book of Government. "The church session is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the congregation, *for which purpose they have power to inquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct of the members of the church.*" Yes, we reply, they have power to do it judicially, not inquisitorially. This grant of power comes immensely short of giving them "*inherent power to demand and receive*" confessions of guilt from those whom they may be pleased to suspect, before they are convicted of guilt.

In some of the remarks upon the Revised Discipline made before the last General Assembly, cases were supposed, such as these: A rumor exists unfavorable to a minister. His presbytery exercise their "inherent power to demand and receive satisfactory explanations." He answers: "Moderator, I judge, in the exercise of my Christian liberty, that it is wisest to go into no explanation of this matter, but to let it die of its own insignificance and vileness." Or he may say: "Considerations of delicacy which you have no right to ask me to divulge, make me unwilling to enter upon an explanation." Or: "Pastoral fidelity or delicacy forbid my disclosure of the affair; you must take my word for it that there is no guilt." What next? May the presbytery proceed to compel his Christian liberty by some penalty or censure? Penalty and censure are due only to *the guilty*, and this man is innocent in law till he is proved guilty. The presbytery has but two alternatives: to admit that such a

power is a nonentity, or else to perpetrate an injustice. It would be easy to suppose other cases equally embarrassing. The suspicious rumor grows out of a two-sided transaction, in which the other party is a member of the same judicatory. The latter is powerful and popular, while the former is weak and unpopular. How easily might a court, armed with this law, inflict outrageous wrong on the unpopular member, by assuming him to be the party bound to render the "satisfactory explanation," while his powerful adversary sat as one of his extra-judicial judges? Now, all such concrete cases the *Review* declines to notice, while it advances general arguments. Common sense, equally with good logic, will decide that, if the conclusion of a general or abstract train of reasoning fails, when brought to the touchstone of a particular case properly embraced under it, that conclusion is unsound. We are entitled to assume that the train is faulty, without stopping to detect the fault. How, then, can such cases as we have supposed be disposed of?

In conclusion of this point, we remark that it is of no force to intimate that the proposed grant of power would do no mischief in the hands of wise and holy men. Experience answers: all presbyters are not wise and holy; and laws and constitutions are designed for the very purpose of preventing rulers from doing wrong, should they be unwise, or prejudiced, or unrighteous. If we could only be sure that all church rulers would be what they ought to be, we would need no laws at all. They would be "a law unto themselves."

II. Passing over points of minor importance, we note the passage in which Dr. Thornwell seeks to justify the rule (Revised Discipline, Chap. IV., Sec. 1) which permits a court to condemn the offender without process when his offence is committed in open court. The objections to this grant of power seem conclusive. That our present Book gives as much power as is safe, in that it permits the offended judicatory, in such a case, to cite the offender, and as many spectators—members of its own body or others—as may be needed for witnesses, on the spot; while the lapse of the "ten free days" will be eminently wholesome in softening exasperation; that a court outraged by such a public offence will probably be in no safe nor calm mood to ascertain both the fact of the offence committed, and the penalty fairly proportioned to it; and that few of these sudden

sentences would be likely to satisfy either the public or the judges themselves after a deliberate review. Dr. Thornwell very queerly argues that there may be "cases in which the judgment ought to be rendered on the spot, in which the language of indignation is the language of justice." We had thought that courts of God's house ought to endeavor to imitate always, as nearly as may be, the calmness of their Master! The Revised Discipline says that one of the objects of discipline is the repentance of the offender. Now, we presume that any sudden heat of indignation with which the lash may be laid on will scarcely further that salutary object. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." The immediate citation to answer ten days after for the sin, would surely be sufficiently demonstrative to prevent the public from suspecting the outraged judicatory of connivance. It is also remarked by Dr. Thornwell (yet more queerly), that "if the court finds itself in a condition not to pass an impartial judgment, it may postpone the matter until its passions have subsided, and reason resumes her supremacy." It *may* postpone! But will it, when thus heated, ever wish to postpone? Who that is acquainted with the human heart does not know that one constant effect of excessive resentment is to justify itself as not excessive? If the court is so angry, then assuredly, it will not think itself too angry to do justice; its anger will insure its blindness. Otherwise we should have this curious contradiction: the court would be too much blinded by passion to see the right, and yet so free from the blindness of passion that they would clearly see it right not to act at that time! It will be better to change the "may postpone" into "*must postpone*," or, in other words, to leave the old regulation unaltered.

III. We will also, in this connection, notice the third article of the chapter on cases without process, by which church sessions are authorized to "strike from the roll of communicants" the names of those who, having committed no overt sin calling for discipline, yet voluntarily avow that they do not consider themselves converted persons. The reviewer's defence of it may be seen at page 395, etc.

It seems at least surprising that a committee of the General Assembly, raised to do the will and pleasure of that body, should have embodied such a provision in their work, when it

is so well known that the Assembly has steadily and invariably refused to sanction it in its previous action. At least two cases, those of the Assemblies of Baltimore and St. Louis, might have been in the minds of the committee. But this by the way.

The next point which will strike the well-informed reader, is the total change in the tone and the line of argument assumed by Dr. Thornwell, from that formerly held by the advocates of this sort of withdrawal from communion, on the floor of the Assembly. In former days, the argument there used to be this: That discipline cannot be the proper means for getting such a member out of the church, because there is no "offence" for which to discipline him; that if this unregenerate church member had continued to commune while conscious of his impenitence, he would have committed a heinous sin, and we may not discipline a man for not doing what would have been highly criminal if done; that the ingenuous candor of such persons in avowing their condition deserves praise rather than censure; and that a censure inflicted for such candor will be unsustained by that moral sense which alone gives force to the spiritual penalties of the church, so that the discipline will do unmingled mischief. Hence it was demanded that the unconverted communicant should receive a sort of honorable dismissal, without discipline, from the communion roll of the church. [And *these are the arguments* which we have heard advanced since the publication of the Revised Discipline in advocacy of this article. If, then, the article has been misunderstood, as Dr. Thornwell complains, that misunderstanding has been shared alike by the friends and enemies of the new book!] And among those who have understood it thus must be ranked one of the most experienced and influential members of the very committee which wrote the article, Dr. Hodge. The ground on which the *Princeton Review* briefly defended the article is obviously that which Dr. Thornwell says is a sheer misapprehension in objectors. For instance, the former argues that the unconverted communicant "*should not be visited with ecclesiastical censure*," simply for believing that he is not prepared to come to the "Lord's table." Such a man, then, according to Dr. Hodge, is not to be gotten out of communion by the way of discipline; but according to Dr. Thornwell, he is to be dealt

with in that way. Seeing the leading members of the Assembly's committee thus at points, we may safely wait till they settle between themselves what they mean. And when large masses meet in collision, it is best for small ones to keep away, lest they be crushed between them.

But now the whole ground is changed. Says Dr. Thornwell: "The unconverted offender is distinctly treated as guilty of an offence." . . . "The man is convicted upon his own showing." . . . "The rule prescribes a penalty to be inflicted by the court." . . . "What is the penalty? It is exclusion, judicial exclusion from the communion of the church for an indefinite time." . . . "No evasion of discipline, because discipline is actually exercised," etc.

Now, we will candidly say that the avowal of these principles by the expounder of the new Book, so different from all previous expositions of this article, gives us great pleasure. Could the article only be made to carry this sense explicitly to all the church, it would be greatly relieved of its objectionable character. But if Dr. Thornwell could succeed in this, we are sure that it would result in a total "change of front" in the two parties to this discussion. His former advocates would be found his opponents; for the very thing they demand is that these moral, ingenuous unbelievers shall *get out of church communion without discipline*, and we, his opposers, would be left his only defenders. But we fear that we could still only become the defenders of his right intention, and not of the language of the article in question.

Let that remark be distinctly apprehended, which has been so often made, that we do not wish the unbelieving communicant in this case disciplined for his candor in avowing his impenitent condition, nor for his proper desire not to profane the sacrament. It is perpetually represented (as for instance, by Dr. Palmer, in the same number of the *Southern Presbyterian Review*), that this absurdity is the necessary alternative of a refusal to dismiss him simply from the communion. No; the proper ground of discipline is the unbelief which he professes; for this, according to Christ's words, is sin, voluntary sin, and "the head and front of his offending." That discipline should be inflicted for that sin, because the government of the church should be in accordance with its doctrines; it is an absurdity

and wickedness to tell sinners from the pulpit that a voluntary avowal of unbelief and impenitence is the sin for which "the wrath of God abideth on them," and from the judgment-seat, that it is nothing disciplinable. We do not wish, as is represented, to compel the unbelieving communicant, by the lash of discipline, to continue his hypocritical approaches to the Lord's table. No; but we desire, by the lash of discipline, to drive him away from the Lord's table, on account of the sin of impenitence; and thus to testify, practically, the truth, that his continuance in impenitence is his fault, and that he ought at once to seek the remedy of it, in Christ's free grace. Here, in a word, is the contrast between the truth and the error on this subject. The erroneous view says the ingenuous, unbelieving communicant, as he has done nothing worthy of discipline, must be allowed the *privilege of* simply *withdrawing* from the communion. The true view regards *coming* to the communion as the *privilege*, and being debarred from it as the *infliction*, and it visits that infliction on the sinner for his unbelief. While the unbeliever demands the privilege of going out unscathed, the church says to him; "Nay, verily, but you shall be driven out for your sins." There the practical result is the same, in that by either way the unbeliever gets out of the communion; but it is vastly different as to the truthfulness of the testimony borne concerning the merits of the case. The reviewer says: "If a man has renounced his God and Saviour in his heart, whether the church has a right to interpose, and say you shall not renounce the profession of your faith, is a very different thing from legitimating either act." If the man is a church member, the church has a right to interpose and prevent his voluntarily *laying off* his profession; she should forbid it, in order that she may exercise immediately her prerogative of *stripping it off*, in righteous judgment. But there is little need to argue these points now, as we have the powerful aid of Dr. Thornwell to assert this principle.

If his exposition of the article could be substituted in the Revised Discipline in place of the article itself, we should be very well satisfied; though we suppose his objection to "*sermonizing*" in a book of mere rules would hardly permit this. But we are compelled to regard the article as highly objectionable, because it will inevitably be misunderstood. Let the

reader bear in mind that Dr. Thornwell admits the self-deceived communicant should be indefinitely suspended from full communion, [as distinctly guilty of an offence, the offence of unbelief], by course of discipline, and a judicial sentence solemnly pronounced. Why, then, give the unfortunate occasion for misunderstanding? His own advocates have fallen into it, by segregating this case from all other cases of discipline for offence, and making it the subject of a peculiar regulation. Why place it in a chapter entitled, "*Of cases without process?*" Process here must mean judicial process; and to make this one of the cases without process, very naturally, if not necessarily, suggests the idea that it is not to be dealt with judicially. Why use novel and peculiar words in describing the result of the case: "His name shall be stricken from the roll of communicants;" instead of saying, as in all other cases deserving the same penalty, "He shall be indefinitely suspended from the communion till he repents." In a set of brief laws, judicial language should be used where it is intended that judicial ideas shall be retained. But above all, the article is peculiarly unfortunate in describing this unbelieving communicant as one who "has committed no offence which requires process." Will not every one understand by process here, disciplinary process? Will not every one understand the article as describing this impenitent communicant as one *who does not require discipline?* It is inevitable. And yet Dr. Thornwell's exposition says he does require discipline, and receives it; yea, severely, in this very article. We will not say that the exposition was an after-thought, to save the article from the overwhelming objections which lay against its doctrine; but we will say, that the exposition is vastly better than the article; and that if any legislation must needs be added to meet this class of cases, we pray that it may be so modified in its wording as to express, without ambiguity, the correct doctrine.

But we hold that no new legislation is needed. It would have been far better, far freer from misapprehension, to leave this class of offences to be dealt with as all other offences are, according to the chapter on General Process. These offences contain nothing in them so peculiar as to require peculiar treatment, except such as is already provided for by that chapter. Dr. Thornwell does, indeed, point out the fact, that in the chapter

on Actual Process there is in the old book no provision for receiving the confession of a member as evidence against him, and issuing the sentence thereon. Well, perhaps it would be very well to supply that omission in that place; and yet there is such a provision in the chapter on Process against a Minister, the spirit of which so obviously applies to other cases, that we presume no church court ever felt any embarrassment about receiving the confession of a delinquent as sufficient evidence of the offence confessed. We have known sessions to sentence on that evidence solely; and we have never yet heard of the presbytery that corrected them for so doing. What hinders, then, that a session should do, under the old book, all the very things which Dr. Thornwell represents his new article as doing; should, after due private exhortation, bring the unconverted communicant before session, receive his voluntary confession of the sin of impenitency, sentence him thereon by a judicial act to an indefinite suspension from the communion, and (not *strike his name* from the roll of communicants; a most inconsistent act with Dr. Thornwell's interpretation,) *mark him as suspended* until repentance, on the church roll? What hinders the session, with our present laws, to make that difference which the absence of any outward crime socially degrading in such an unbeliever ought to make, so as to affix no undue obloquy by their sentence? The way is just as open now to this regular judicial action on such cases as need be. The real difficulty is, as Dr. Thornwell will find, that those brethren who desire change do not desire any judicial action, any discipline, for such cases. And if he can succeed in convincing them that his exposition of this article is the one it must bear, he will soon find them against him, instead of for him. And then we will give him a hearty welcome to our side of the question.

There is a practical objection to the introduction of this article into our Book of Discipline, which Dr. Thornwell mentions, but does not further refute. We believe that time will show it to be a solid objection. It has been suggested that persons conscious of evil doings which are likely to become known, or of a desire to perpetrate such evil doings, will seek to evade the more regular and painful forms of discipline, by making this profession of impenitence before session, and having themselves summarily "marked off." And church sessions

will too often permit this mode of severance from the church connection of a troublesome member, even where the offence is already flagrant; for it is a painful and invidious task to administer discipline. Thus, it is to be greatly feared, this new article will become the door of escape for the mass of offenders, and the salutary fear of regular discipline will become almost unknown. It will prove a sort of general ecclesiastical bankrupt law, by which everybody will get whitewashed who is in debt, so as to defy the sheriff. Let those who best know human nature and the nature of church sessions say whether these prognostications are not well founded; and let those who may live to see this article generally established mark their fulfilment.

IV. In following the order of Dr. Thornwell's remarks we are now led back to the first chapter of the Revised Discipline, and to its definition of what constitutes an "offence" in the disciplinable sense. Where the old Book so defines an offence as to make the Bible the statute-book of the Presbyterian Church, and to make nothing disciplinable except as the Bible makes it so, the new Book says:

"An offence, the proper object of discipline, is anything in the faith or practice of a professed believer which is contrary to the word of God; the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly being accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as standard expositions of the teachings of Scripture in relation both to faith and practice.

"Nothing, therefore, ought to be considered by any judicatory an offence, or admitted as matter of accusation, which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture, or from the regulations and practice of the church, founded on Scripture, and which does not involve those evils which discipline is intended to prevent."

The last sentence is extracted *verbatim* from the present Book, and appended to the definition which the committee have substituted for the old one. It would seem that a writer in the spring number of the *Southern Presbyterian Review* objected to this new definition, first, that it was ambiguous; and second, that our standards do not profess to give an exhaustive enum-

eration of disciplinable offences. Dr. Thornwell well disclaims any ambiguity in the article, and it may be said that here at least he and Dr. Hodge are agreed in their interpretation, though not in their arguments therefor. They both emphatically declare that their article was intended to mean this: that "to us Presbyterians nothing is unlawful which is not repugnant to our standards of practice." Yet it seems clear to us, that when Drs. Hodge and Thornwell are not present to explain what they meant, the article will inevitably lead to confusion. It lays down one principle in its first member, and then, in its second, adopts the very words of the old Book, which notoriously taught the opposite doctrine. In its first member it says, in substance: Nothing is an offence but what can be proved such from our standards; and in its second it says nothing is an offence but what can be proved such from the Scriptures, *or* our standards. And the conjunction is disjunctive. If this is not saying two different things, we cannot conceive how to say them. Dr. Thornwell says that, grant this, still no confusion can arise; it comes to the same thing anyhow, because whatever the Bible condemns the standards condemn. Why, then, we reply, is there any debate? How is it that he and Dr. Hodge have both written ably to sustain the propriety of the difference made, when no difference is made? *It does not come to the same thing*; there are two contrasted doctrines, the adoption of either one of which excludes the other, as is obvious in fact. The error by which the reviewer's assertion on this point is sustained is simply a conversion of terms. Thus, it is true, there is a sense in which our standards condemn whatever the Bible condemns; they do this in general terms, inasmuch as they avow the Bible to be the authoritative rule of life. But in the sense necessary to Dr. Thornwell's assertion, our standards do not condemn whatever the Bible condemns; that is, they do not contain all the ethical prohibitions which the Bible contains. The two rules are not conterminous and co-extensive with each other. Their relation is not justly "that of original and translation," but rather that of a human abridgment of an inspired work, and that abridgment confessedly not complete. We believe, therefore, that there will be ambiguity, and that it will be mischievous.

But it must be acknowledged that the sense put on the article by Drs. Hodge and Thornwell is perspicuous enough, and objectionable enough, inasmuch as it makes the Confession of Faith, a human composition, the exclusive *rule of life* for Presbyterians, so far as their Christian life is amenable to church authority.

In defending this, Dr. Thornwell endeavors to preclude objection by saying in the outset, that the constitution of the church has been agreed upon among us, as being the whole sense of the church concerning what we are to believe, and what we are to practice; and that it is our agreement to this which aggregates us together as a distinct denomination. That this is true as to what church officers are to believe, we admit; the constitution settles that in requiring us to subscribe our doctrinal standards. And that it will be true as to duties also, when we adopt the Revised Discipline, (should that evil day ever come,) we also admit. But we deny that it is true of our present constitution. Where? In what chapter does the constitution either say or imply it? This *a priori* statement of the argument is, therefore, a *petitio principii*. We assert that there is an intrinsic and obvious difference between making a certain doctrinal epitome the basis of official communion, the circle of essential points in revealed theology being of definite, ascertainable, and limited number; and making any ethical epitome of human composition the basis of the Christian life for both officers and people, when the points of Christian practice are so endlessly varied, and varying with every change of circumstance. Hence, our present Book is perfectly consistent in recognizing this distinction, and making the Confession the standard for proving heresy, while it makes only the Bible the standard for proving immorality.

The objection to the proposed change seems very obvious, from the acknowledged incompleteness of our standards as an enumeration of all possible offences. Our Confession and two Catechisms do not profess to give a complete classification of sins; if they did, they would betray only folly in their authors. Shall then all those sins go unpunished by church courts which happen to be omitted in their enumeration? Dr. Thornwell answers: Neither do the Scriptures give a complete enumeration of all possible sins; for if they did, they would be of un-

limited extent. What, then, do they do? Why, he says, they lay down and illustrate general principles of morals, which apply by inference to all possible cases. And now that the Scriptures have done this, why, he asks, cannot our standards copy their doing in an uninspired epitome? We reply: Because their authors were not inspired. Finite man is as truly incapable of making an exact copy of God's works as he is of originating them. If infinite wisdom and infallible skill were required to state and illustrate, in one moderate volume, ethical principles so comprehensive as to permit safe and certain application to the innumerable cases which emerge in the endless variety of human circumstances, then plainly infinite wisdom was just as much needed to epitomize that wondrous volume, to know what to omit, to know how to word and state its principles, to know how to fix all the nicer shades of relation, *inter se*. Nothing short of infinite wisdom could be sure of not leaving out something, or altering something, by which the *infinite applicability* of the divine work would be marred and lost; and we fearlessly assert that the Bible is the only book in the world which possesses this boundless scope and flexibility—the only book which will never need additions and amendments. Herein is one evidence of its divine origin. Let it be remembered also, in this connection, that the Bible is a much larger book than our standards; larger than our standards can conveniently be made. Hence the claim for universal applicability for our standards is seen to be yet more arrogant.

But the reviewer adds: The Scriptures only acquire this universal applicability by availing ourselves of all fair inferences from them. Why not admit all fair inferences from the Confession of Faith, and Catechism also, thus securing for them equal reach of application? We answer, first, this process will not secure for them an equal reach, because they were not constructed by divine foreknowledge. Let the thing be tried, and some day or other, just so sure as the world stands, some case will emerge to which our standards cannot be brought to apply, by either express statement or necessary inference, without going behind them to the Bible. But, say Drs. Hodge and Thornwell, we must not go behind them, for henceforth “nothing is to be unlawful which is not repugnant to our standards of practice.”

We answer, second, we must not condemn a man by inferences from the standards, because Dr. Hodge argues the value and justice of this new doctrine mainly on this ground (and it is obviously the only consistent argument), that we will have our standards instead of our Bibles as the test of our church rights, in order that those rights may be no longer suspended on inferences. Surely it is a most licentious sort of logic, that the committee of revision shall say to us at one time that the Bible must not be our statute book, because there must be no judging of men by mere inferences, and then at another time claim to make inferences by which to judge men, and these inferences from a standard less reliable than the old one! Nay gentlemen, we will not "play fast and loose."

But this leads us to answer, third, that to use fair inferences from God's word in judging men is proper, but Dr. Thornwell, in making our standards the statute book, presents them as such because they are themselves inferences from the Bible. Are we to be judged, then, by inferences from inferences? The new article says that the Confession and Catechisms are accepted by us "as *standard expositions* of the teachings of Scripture, both as to faith and practice." Now, are our judges to go to *expounding the expositions*? We had thought the nature of an exposition was, that it expresses and applies the meaning of the document to the case in hand, in such a way as to preclude the need of further explanation. Dr. Hodge told us that the beauty of the new plan would be, we should be done with uncertainties and inferences as to our church rights, and every man would know, from the express words of the constitution, how he stood. But now, it seems, we are to be tried in very many cases, not by fair inferences direct from God's word, but by a human exposition of a human exposition of God's word! We fear that after this double distillation, very little of the divine, infallible justice will remain in the *residuum* in some cases. We echo the sentiment of the writer whom Dr. Thornwell criticises: "May God forbid that any thing shall ever be the statute book of Presbyterian Church courts, as to Christian morals, except the Holy Bible."

V. The next feature of the Revised Discipline which Dr. Thornwell proceeds to defend, is that which takes away the right of the lower court when appealed from or complained

against to a special and separate hearing before the higher court, to which their decision is carried for review ; and grants them the right to sit again if members of the higher court, and vote a second time upon the case. Let the reader see Chapter VIII. of the Revised Book. Dr. Thornwell properly stated in the Assembly that this change is fundamental. The arguments by which he defends it are of three classes ; that the lower court appealed from is not properly, and therefore should not be made a *party* to the trial of the appeal ; that to take away the right of voting upon the appeal from its members violates the symmetrical, representative character of our system of government, according to which all the lower bodies are represented in the higher, next above it ; and that the judicial proceedings in appeal cases will be much simplified by the change. After a careful examination, we feel constrained to dissent from these conclusions.

And the first remark which suggests itself is, that the debaters on both sides of this matter seem to have lost sight of the fact that two points, not necessarily connected, are involved here. We might simplify our present mode by no longer admitting the lower court to a special hearing, as a sort of secondary party to the case, and yet not commit the anomaly of giving it a right to vote again in the new decision of the case. Why should the one change necessitate the other ?

But we are persuaded it will be better to venture on neither change. On the one hand it is manifest that when an appeal or complaint is made, the court below is inevitably involved as a virtual party in the decision of that appeal or complaint. The simple fact that they have decided the case already insures this ; for if this decision is reversed upon the new hearing, there at once is one ground of interest for them in that decision, and there is always a possibility, so far as the nature of the case is concerned, that the grounds of that reversal may imply or express censure on them ; so that there is, in any such case, a liability of the court appealed from to possible censure. These are the stubborn facts of the matter. Therefore our present Book deals according to facts, in regarding the lower court as secondary and collateral parties. Dr. Thornwell condemns what he calls the monstrosity of having two issues up in one case, and asserts that if the decision appealed from is not only mis-

taken, but censurable, "there is a way for trying the lower courts," more complete under the new Book; "but when they are tried, no other issues are mixed up with the process." We should like to see how! Arrange as we may, the one issue is implicitly involved in the other; we may refuse to regard the implicit one for the time being, but it is there in spite of us, and we can only ignore it at the risk of injustice and inconsistency. Suppose a superior court should conclude that a given sentence of a lower court was so erroneous as to deserve censure, would it be possible to avert the mind from the truth, that if so, then the person wronged by that sentence is, *ipso facto*, pronounced to be entitled to its reversal? Would it be possible for a court justly to refuse an appeal for reversal founded on this argument? We trow not. There, then, would be one issue implicitly determined in determining the other.

But further: it is a great misrepresentation to call our present mode of hearing an appeal a monstrous complication of two separate issues. In one sense there are two issues; that is, in the decision of the one, another is or may be involved as a corollary. But it is only involved as a corollary. The issue, as actually debated in the higher court, is not a double-headed one. It is, "Shall the decision below be sustained or not?" This is the only point to which the decision, in the first instance, looks. And when this main issue draws after itself, *in consequence of its own inevitable nature* (and not, bear in mind, in consequence of our bungling mode of trying it), another dependent issue, which *is*, and in spite of us *will be* virtually decided when the main issue is decided, we do affirm that it is neither monstrous, nor unnatural, nor unusual to debate the two together. Things virtually equivalent often occur in secular judicatories, especially in that class nearest akin in spirit to church courts, courts of equity; and we are astonished that Dr. Thornwell should have been so incautious as to imply the contrary. What else is done, for instance, in every case which decides a *negative pregnant*? What else are all those multifarious cases in which alternative claims of right are urged by second and third parties against a first party? When the decision of the immediate issue necessarily carries with it the decision of the implied issue, any judge of equity would rather consider it monstrous to refuse to hear argument for the latter

before pressing to a decision, seeing it would be too late afterwards. It is said that, according to our present mode, the appellant (or complainant) "is both suitor and prosecutor;" that while he is enjoying the new trial of his case the lower court "is also on trial for its character." This surely is a great overstatement. The appellant appears directly only as suitor. That the character of the lower court may possibly be implicated is inevitable, if there is to be any appeal at all; but he is not present for the purpose of assailing them; he comes to defend himself. The attempt is made to show that the court appealed from is not properly a party, by asserting that the sentence of that court is not the thing carried up by the appeal (as it seems the troublesome writer in the April number of the *Review* shrewdly asserted), but the same old case. "All that he (the appellant) should be allowed to transfer is the indential case upon which the lower court sat." Yes, we reply, just so; but it is that case *as decided below*; and not now a case to be taken up *de novo*. Superior courts are prohibited from going behind inferior courts, and touching judicial cases, except as cases decided. See Revised Book itself, Chap. VIII. Sec. I. 4, and Sec. III. 1. "The higher tribunal must have before it precisely what the lower had—the same issue, the same testimony, the same circumstances." Precisely, but *with the sentence passed thereon*. It is the same case, it is said, which should be brought up. Aye, but the sentence is the issuing of that case; and this is therefore the *gist* of what is brought up. Says the Revised Book itself: "An appeal is the removal of a case *already decided*," etc. It is obvious to common sense that the sentence is the thing which our law of appeal allows the appellant to have reviewed. For if the sentence were not adverse to him, he would have no professed grievance, and would be allowed no remedy. We see not, on the whole, how human wit can evade the fact, that the court appealed from is inevitably implicated as indirectly a party, if it is to be present at all. Rule it out altogether, releasing it at the same time from all judicial responsibility to the appellate court; and then only it ceases to be a party. Now those are the very things which are usually done in our civil courts of appeal. The lower court is not present at all in the appellate court, and has no *need nor right* to be there, because it is not at all responsible to the appellate

court; [but only to the legislature by impeachment, or in some such way.] That is the reason that appeal cases appear in civil courts of appeal in the simple and single form which Dr. Thornwell desires to realize in our higher church courts. Well, if he can revolutionize our whole system (the thing he himself reprobates), so as to exclude them bodily, he may justly realize that conception. But if the lower court is to be present as a constituent element of the upper, it is, and must be an implied party; and this, we repeat, results not from the present forms of our Book, but from the inevitable nature of things. Hence we argue, being in some sense parties, they *should be heard* in their own cause, and *should not vote* in their own cause.

Dr. Thornwell's second argument is from the nature of our series of church courts, in which each superior one is composed of a representation from all the inferior ones next beneath it embraced in its territory. To prohibit the court appealed from to vote on the appeal, he urges, is in violation of the principle of full representation in this system. We fully admit that it is a partial departure from it. But for this departure there are controlling reasons. Man can never, in his imperfect institutions, apply a set of general principles with perfect symmetry in all their details. And when they clash in their application, his wisdom is to make that one which is less important in those circumstances give way to that which is more important. Now, in judicial cases, the preservation of the representative feature in its completeness is less important than in any other. For a judicial decision creates no law of general application; it only applies one already enacted by the general voice. When the *law-making* power is exercised by a higher court, to enact what may affect the rights of all generally, then justice requires that all shall be represented in the legislative body. But when the *law-applying* power is exercised to affect the rights of one party, justice allows that the universal representation of the whole may be waived, especially if thereby a more impartial dealing can be secured for the party whose rights alone are immediately at stake.

And now the competing principle which demands that this universality of representation shall be waived in such a case of appeal is this: The transcendent importance of IMPARTIALITY in the holy transactions of the judgment-seat. Judging is a

function delegated from God. Yea, we can hardly say that he *delegates* it; for "He standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." The man who "stands before the judges" "stands before the Lord." (Ps. lxxxii. 1; Deut. xix. 17.,) Unrighteous judgment outrages God's dearest attributes, and inflicts the most aggravated of all human wrongs on its victims. Hence this sacred function should be guarded against unfairness and partiality with jealous care. And the principle which dictates this safeguard is this: that the human mind, however honest, is an imperfect instrument for discriminating truth and right, and that its impartiality in weighing evidence is usually, though unconsciously, affected by the forming and uttering of a deliberate opinion. This practical truth is attested by the wisdom and experience of all men. The man who should boast that his powers of moral discrimination were incapable of bias by such a cause would only disclose ignorance of his own heart. And this bias is usually unconscious, and therefore, in the case of every honest man, the more dangerous; for if he suspected its existence, he would contend against it. Now, we have noticed with pain a persistent misrepresentation of these obvious facts by the advocates of the changes under debate. They speak as though the rule excluding the former judges from voting on the appeal implied those judges to be intentional knaves, and harborers of wicked, conscious prejudice; whereas, they assert (in terms more flattering, we confess, to their readers than the wholesome truth which duty compels us to utter), that Presbyterian ministers and ruling elders are honorable and incapable of injustice. Well, we hope we are incapable of intentional injustice; but not to undertake to speak for our brethren, we would profess for ourselves that we have sad reason to know that we are very liable to unintentional mistake and unconscious infirmity of judgment; and that, for our part, we should be far from coveting the awful post of *judge* in a case upon which our judgment was already committed, affecting the sacred rights of our brother. Besides, as has been hinted, it is possible that all Presbyterian ministers and ruling elders may not always be honorable men. Have such things never been heard of? And it is precisely for restraining such men from injustice that good laws are made. The good men are a law unto themselves.

Again, let the reader, to see the force of the facts we now urge, consider how universally good secular legislators have acted on the principle that a committal to a formally expressed opinion disqualifies the mind for impartial investigation. Where is the wise judge who would admit a jurymen to be impanelled after professing that he had formed and uttered a deliberate opinion? Where is the case that ever a jurymen who had participated in a verdict was allowed to sit in a new trial of the same cause? (And we surmise that if any of our venerable church doctors should say in such a case that his exclusion was an implied insult, he would only be hugely laughed at by the court-room!) So rigid is the law on this point, that when a practicing attorney is elevated to the judge's bench, he is not permitted to preside in the trial of any cause in which he had been even retained as counsel before his elevation, though he had never pleaded it. Again; does Dr. Thornwell propose to give to the member of our church courts who has acted as advocate for an accused Presbyterian, a vote on the decision of the case he has argued? We trow not. But on his principles, why not?

We fearlessly assert again, that in all the judicial usages of this country there cannot be found one single parallel case to countenance the usage which the Revised Book proposes. It has been asserted that in some civil courts of appeal or review, the judges of the courts below sit and vote on appeals from their own decisions. We believe such cases are exceedingly rare. But if there are any (we know of none), they afford no analogy whatever to the case in hand. In those civil courts of inferior jurisdiction, there is a *jury* which pronounces the verdict; the judge is the mere umpire between the two parties, and never takes the attitude of decider of the facts. The most he does is to expound the law, so that after all he has never officially pronounced on the merits of the case: and should he even sit again on that case in a court of review, might be comparatively impartial. Now, in our church courts, *the members are the jury*—only the moderator is the presiding umpire. The members make the verdict on the law and the facts. Therefore, to find a case properly parallel to those which the Revised Book would introduce, we should have to find the unheard of enormity of a jurymen sitting in a new trial, and perhaps deciding the

second verdict by his vote, who had already pronounced on the case!

Indeed, that an appeal or complaint should go exclusively to new judges follows from the very nature of those remedies, and from the very object of the constitution in allowing their use. Why does our Book allow a defendant his appeal? Because the Book presumes that the sentence may be wrong. The possibility that it may be wrong is the *sole ground* on which the utility and justice of the appeal rest. Now, shall the same judges help to decide the appeal, who, upon the only supposition on which the appeal is a right and valuable remedy, have already proved that they will decide it wrong? Let it be remembered that both the old and new Books properly enjoin that in the hearing of the appeal the same case, with the same testimony, and usually no other testimony, shall be brought into the higher court. These mistaken judges, therefore, will have no other *data* on which to decide than those on which they have already decided erroneously. Unless they were very heedless before, or are very fickle now, they will see the same conclusions from the same *data* which they saw at first. And it is always possible that they may turn the scale by their votes. Hence, in the very nature of an appeal, if it is to present any certain hope of remedy for wrong, it must take the case to a set of judges wholly new. Dr. Thornwell represents his troublesome April correspondent as saying that this ought to be so, because this "is what the appellant expects;" and then rejoins that if the wishes of the appellant are to govern, the problem would very soon be solved; for he desires only such judges as will clear him. We have taken the trouble to look into the passage alluded to; and to us it appears plain that this writer meant to express the idea that the appeal ought to go to new judges exclusively, because this is what the appellant is *entitled to expect* from the nature of the remedy. And it seems to us that in this meaning he is entirely correct.

Dr. Thornwell presents three arguments for the admission of the lower court. His first is, that their decision was probably right. We reply, Yes; but the whole use and meaning of the appeal is in the fact that it was *possibly wrong*. So that in the only case where the remedy can do any good it is neutralized. He adds, that if the decision of the lower court was hasty and

prejudiced, this would prove not only that its members were unfit for seats there, but that they were not fit for seats any where. We reply, Well, be this as it may, the Book, even the new Book, does imply that some of their decisions may be hasty and prejudiced; for what else is the meaning of the appeal? And we find that Dr. Thornwell, in his third argument, says: The members of the lower court had better be in the upper court as judges, than in its lobby as irresponsible solicitors. It seems, then, he contemplates the existence of such a character in the members, that they shall be capable of being wheedled by lobby-members into the support of an unrighteous decision. Then, by the showing of his first argument, they are not fit for seats there. As to this third reason, it may be added, there lobby-members cannot vote; it is the *votes* that do the work. The second reason urged is, that to treat the members of the lower courts as honest men will be the best way to make them honest. The reply is, that the present rule treats them as honest, but fallible, and therefore, possibly lying under an honest mistake. An honest mistake is often the most incorrigible.

It has been very justly urged against the new Book, that under its provisions a large presbytery in a synod, or an important session in a feeble presbytery, might so preponderate as actually to constitute a majority of the court appealed to, so that the outrage on all common justice would be presented, of the party appealed against possessing a controlling power over the decision of the very appeal against themselves. The answer attempted is this: that at any rate a remedy for this outrageous wrong may be found by the appellant when he goes to the Assembly with his cause, because no single synod has a preponderating influence in the General Assembly. And yet, on the very same page, Dr. Thornwell himself cites a case in which the Synod of Philadelphia did have a preponderating influence in the Assembly in an appeal case! The self-refutation seems complete enough, and yet it may be added that one single interested vote in a bench of judges may be preponderating in a sense, for it may decide the cause unjustly by a majority of one. A counterpoise to this weighty objection is presented by Dr. Thornwell in that instance, when the Philadelphia Synod being in the house in one case, and out of the house in another case in which it was itself appealed from, the Assembly decided

in contrary ways, where the merits of the cases were the same. We reply by asking whether Drs. Thornwell and Hodge believe in the maxim, "that it is better ten guilty men should escape, than one innocent man suffer unjustly?" Better be inconsistent than unjust.

Dr. Thornwell's third main argument for the new rule is, that it vastly simplifies proceedings in appeals, by cutting off all doubts about who are original parties, about the order of hearing, about the extent to which the exclusion of the lower court shall be carried, and such like. He repeats the remarks of a minister who said that it seemed to him to be in this respect nearly perfect. To us, a perfect simplicity in all the inevitable and multiform varieties of judicial investigations seems a very questionable compliment. The proceedings of a drum-head court martial are very simple, and those of the Grand Turk were simpler still. There was one slight deduction to be made from the beauty thence arising, that quite a number of heads were cut off wrongfully that could not be put on again when the mistake was discovered.

But we utterly discredit the assertion that the working of the new Book in this matter will be so much simpler. And to justify this skepticism, we are not bound to suggest or detect the sources of obscurity in it. Every one who knows anything of legislation, knows that all the weak points in the new wording of a new rule cannot be predicted until the severe touchstone of actual cases, arising with their endless shades of difference and complications, reveals the ambiguities. It is too early for the friends and authors of the new Book to boast in this matter. Let them wait till their articles have stood the test of some twenty years' practice. Yet it requires no very prophetic eye to see that ambiguities are likely to arise out of them in several places. For instance, does the committee of review mean that lower courts shall vote on the approval of their own records, when brought up in a higher court under their Chap. VIII., Sec. 1? We hardly suppose they do, although they do not say. It would seem simply preposterous that they should. Yet a consistent argument may be made to show that the new Book does intend them to vote on the approval of their own records; for it gives them explicitly a vote on the approval of any and every decision in their records which happens to be brought up by

appeal or complaint. Therefore, consistency should require that they be allowed to vote on all. There, we surmise, is to be a *teterrima causa belli!* Again, here is another: the new Book says that in all cases of appeal and complaint there shall be but two parties to plead the issue in the higher court, the appellant and appellee. Who is to be appellee in cases not judicial? See new Book, Chap. VIII., Sec. iii. 8. We are left "all at sea." Who is to be appellee in a case which was prosecuted on common fame? The judicatory which so prosecuted the appellant? If the answer is affirmative, then how shall that judicatory be both judge and party? Surely that were a curious amalgam. Or is the committee of prosecution raised by that lower court to appear as appellee? If so, they virtually appear as the representative, the attorney of the prosecuting court below, for they are its creature. It would be a curious scene to behold a party sitting in judgment on his own case, which he was at the time prosecuting through his attorney. But we are not out of the thicket yet. A presbytery has prosecuted and convicted a member on common fame, employing therefor a prosecuting committee. The condemned member appeals to synod. All the presbytery have seats there. Says the Revised Discipline, the appellant and appellee shall be the only parties to the case in all its subsequent stages. Who is the appellee here? We guess—it is only a guess—that Dr. Thornwell would answer, "The prosecuting committee of presbytery." But the Revised Book says, all the members of the court appealed from shall sit in judgment on the appeal in synod; to unseat one single man mars the integrity of our representative system. The prosecuting committee will therefore claim to sit on the case in Synod, and they are also sole defendants in the case! Here, then, is another of the startling "antinomies" of the new Book. Again, in case of a complaint, who is the other party, the complaine? (if we may coin a word.) The article [Chap. VIII., Sec. iv. 5.] is silent. The case may be this: a minority complains against a majority in presbytery. Is the majority then the defendant? May they still sit on their own case as judges while pleading as defendants? And if so, may the complaining minority sit as judges also? Again, Dr. Thornwell says the new rule will cut off the tiresome, long speeches. We see not how this follows, for the members of

the court appealed from are now sitting as judges, and in that capacity they must surely be permitted to state and argue their own decisions. Here also the principles of the new Book leave a troublesome ambiguity; for it does not appear whether all the members of the lower court are to be permitted to defend their decision, or whether the lower court, when notified of an appeal, is to have the privilege of appointing any special commissioners other than their representatives in the upper court to defend their sentence. Now, of all these doubts one remark may be made. Any *new* Book will have its ambiguities; doubtless our present book had them when it was new. Its advantage is that they are now cleared away by the wise precedents of thirty-nine Assemblies. Its language is "ascertained" by decisions.

Both Dr. Hodge and Dr. Thornwell do indeed assert that perpetually recurring confusions in the Assembly in appeal cases prove that those ambiguities are incorrigible. The last Assembly is referred to, in which the moderator and prominent members differed as to the "original parties," and the extent to which the exclusion of the lower courts must be carried. Yet this is the fact, that a few minutes' search in any digest of the Assembly's actions would have clearly settled all the cases there mooted. Surely the Assembly's previous decisions are precedents for itself, at least till they are formally repealed. We repeat, the stubborn fact is, that clear precedents of previous Assemblies presented rules by which every one of the cases which we are told so bothered wise heads in Indianapolis last May, might have been promptly and indisputably settled. Now, if "great men are not always wise," if Doctors of Divinity will forget what might be easily learned, if they will get up to speak on a point before they have examined it, shall our poor suffering Book of Discipline be blamed for it? What more can a Book, or a set of precedents founded thereon, do than give clear rules? If men will not read and remember them, it is hard measure to blame the Book for that. Dr. Hodge declares that the fault is not in the Assembly, but in the Book. This account of the matter is doubtless the more complimentary one, and is therefore likely to be the more popular one. But men who are practically acquainted with the natural inaptness of most minds for methodical judicial processes, before they have been trained by experience, know that it is incorrect. The truth is, that a

natural aptitude for these formal processes in advance of experience is a very rare trait, even of strong minds. By the blessing of our God, our church courts have very rare experience of judicial proceedings, except in the Assembly, into which a few of them run every year, as into a common reservoir. Hence, when called in their inexperience to grapple with such business, they will inevitably blunder somewhat as to forms of proceeding. And yet (another fact which Dr. Hodge does not mention) with all the blunderings of members of the Assembly, there has been a remarkable uniformity, and a remarkable absence of contradictory precedents concerning modes of procedure! Surely the old Book cannot be so bad after all, since it has uniformly led so many inexperienced followers through the tangled jungle. But it may be very easily reduced to a question of fact, whether it is the Book which is in fault. Its chapters on actual process must be clear and simple, for the committee of revision have not substantially changed its processes. But we do testify that the complications which church courts usually experience in attempting to apply those chapters in trials *de novo*, are just as great, making allowance for the smaller numbers of judges, as those which arise in the Assembly in appeal cases. We do solemnly and emphatically forewarn our brethren, that if they suppose a change of process is to prevent embarrassments as to forms of proceeding in a court so cumbrous and inexperienced as our Assembly, they are doomed to a bitter and mortifying disappointment. And we conclude this part of the discussion with this emphatic question: Has the wit of man ever yet discovered a mode which avoids a large degree of intricacy, and expense of time and trouble in judicial investigations, where those investigations are properly guarded against injustice and oppression? Ask our secular judges. Ask experienced lawyers. Our committee of revision, in promising that it shall be otherwise with us, are inviting us to run after the bag of gold which is under the foot of the rainbow.

VI. The sixth and last subject of remark shall be the relation assigned by the proposed revision between unconverted baptized persons and the church. Where the old Book says, "All baptized persons are members of the church, are under its care, and subject to its government and discipline," the new Book proposes to say, "All baptized persons, being members of the

church, are under its government and training. . . . Only those, however, who have made a profession of faith in Christ are proper subjects of judicial prosecution."

This change might have passed as being rather non-essential in the minds of many but for the principles on which it has been advocated, for those principles radically affect our church theory. This is the reason that we call serious attention to this point, and consider it justifiable to invoke the patient consideration of Presbyterian readers. We are happy to learn that the committee of revision are not unanimous in this change, but that two influential members, Drs. Hoge and McGill, hold the old and scriptural view of the Reformers. We are happy to have this opportunity to express the pleasure and gratitude excited by the wise and logical *exposé* of this subject given by the former, in the July number of the *Princeton Review*. It is our devout hope that in this point at least, in which the committee themselves differ, our Saviour's maxim may be found true, and the house divided against itself may not stand.

The ground on which this exemption of baptized unbelievers from discipline was first argued by sundry writers (we do not say by Dr. Thornwell) was that it was unreasonable to inflict discipline on them, because they did not become members by their own free choice. Dr. Thornwell now disavows this ground; his mind is too logical to advance it. The standing analogy of civil commonwealths refutes it, for in them subjection to their jurisdiction does not depend on consent of the subject, but on birth, or mere presence in it. Civil government is the ordinance of God for all human beings. Neither he nor natural justice gives any one an option whether he shall submit to its jurisdiction or not, for the alternative would be all the lawlessness of the savage condition. Every man is *born* a member of civil society, and subject to its beneficent jurisdiction, whether he chooses or not. His possession of various other privileges of the commonwealth, and his subjection to other grades of responsibility, may depend on certain qualifications of age, sex, property; but he is *born a citizen*, and as such born subject to the general jurisdiction which protects the whole community against crime. The object of this temporal ordinance of God, civil government, is to secure man's temporal rights and well-being. Now, it is just as much God's ordinance for mankind,

that his people shall live under ecclesiastical government, and that their children shall be subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction by birth. They have no option allowed them by God. The children of his people (and all parents ought to be his professed people, if they did their duty), are *born* subjects to this spiritual commonwealth, which God has ordained for securing man's spiritual well-being. No man is naturally entitled by justice to any option whether he shall be a member of it, because to refuse membership would be in all ordinary cases—"Out of the church catholic there is no ordinary possibility of salvation"—to throw away his soul into everlasting perdition, a thing which no one has a natural right to do. Let the reader look again at this. Since the visible church catholic is God's instituted means for ministering redemption to mankind, no man can claim a natural right to remain out of it if he chooses, unless he can claim a natural right to destroy his soul, and other souls. Hence it is no hardship to him who is born into the church to be held subject to its jurisdiction without waiting for his consent. As in the civil, so in the ecclesiastical commonwealth, there are different grades of privilege and responsibility, such as admission to communion, to office, which are not universal to all members, but depend on circumstances of age, sex, and qualification. But subjection to the general duties and jurisdiction which are common to all is implied in the very idea of membership.

Let us now proceed to Dr. Thornwell's ground. He correctly says that the core of the question is, *whether church-membership necessarily involves subjection to judicial prosecution*. He correctly remarks that as membership does not of itself imply admission to all grades of privilege, nor subjection to all grades of responsibility, it does not necessarily imply subjection to discipline, unless a particular reason be shown therefor. This is true, and it shall be our business to show that reason. He complains that all the arguments of the other side amount to this faulty syllogism, "All church-members are entitled to all privileges; all baptized persons are church-members, therefore they are under discipline," which, as he justly says, would prove them entitled to admission to communion and office. Now, we do profess that we have nowhere seen such an argument used against him. But as we assume no responsibility for the pre-

vious debaters, it is enough for us to say that our syllogism is not the above, but this :

“All church-members must be subject to all the responsibilities essential to the idea of membership. But discipline is essential to the idea of membership ; therefore all members must be subject to discipline.”

There will be no dispute about the first, or major proposition, nor is the dispute between us and the advocates of the Revised Book whether all baptized persons are really church-members. The point of debate is upon the second, or minor proposition. If that is true, it is irrelevant to point to the fact that “in every commonwealth there are privileges and disabilities peculiar to the different classes of citizens,” for there are also other privileges and liabilities essential to the very character of a citizen, and therefore common to all. Is a liability to judicial prosecution necessarily implied in the idea of membership? We say, yes.

First, Because the parallel case of the civil commonwealth proves this. In the state, all citizens are not entitled to all grades of privilege, nor liable to all kinds of public duty ; but all who can be properly treated as intelligent moral agents, minors, females, slaves, freeholders, magistrates, all are alike subject to those general laws which prosecute crime judicially.

Second, Because to give membership in any body governed by laws or rules, and yet not exact subjection to those rules under some penalty, at least so far as expulsion for their breach, is destructive of the very existence of the body. The least possible power consistent with the idea of an organism bound together by laws, is the power of expulsion. Thus says Whateley in his *Kingdom of Christ*, with obvious truth. For an organism which has no power to enforce the rules by which it subsists is inevitably disintegrated. But now, if the baptized unbeliever is a member of the church and has any rights as such, shall he be liable to expulsion, depriving him of those rights without any judicial process? That he must be liable to expulsion if he breaks laws, is necessary. This were strange justice, to punish without trial!

Third, Because, as Dr. Thornwell says, the church is the school of Jesus Christ, into which the children of believers are entered, to learn the way of salvation. And the power to teach,

possessed by the church, must be attended by some power to enforce attendance on her teachings, otherwise it is absurdly nugatory. There is no other school on earth where pupils may break all rules, and uniformly neglect the instructions, and yet the master have not power to declare their connection with the school severed.

Fourth. Because both the Scriptures (see Gen. xviii. 19), and the Book of Government say that "a church consists of a number of professing Christians with their offspring, voluntarily associated together for divine worship *and godly living*, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures." (Chapter II., Sec. 4.) "The universal church consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, *and of submission to his laws*," (Sec. 2.) "They (Presbyterian judicatories) possess the right of *requiring obedience to the laws* of Christ." . . . "They can call before them *any* offender against the order and government of the church." (Chapter VIII., Sec. 2.) "The church session . . . have power to inquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct of members of the church, to call before them offenders and witnesses, being members of their own congregation." (Chapter IX., Sec. 6.) It is the doctrine of our Book of Government, that not only instruction in saving truth, but also godly living, are the objects of ecclesiastical institutions; that the children of professors, as well as professors themselves, are associated together for these objects, and consequently that the judicial power to enforce correct conduct by spiritual penalties extends over all members of the church. The committee of revision claim that they have harmonized the Book of Discipline better with the rest of our system. It appears here that they will have to carry their revolutionary hands through the Book of Government also before there is harmony.

These reasons lead us to conclude that subjection to jurisdiction is necessarily implied in membership, and that hence all members of the church are so subject.

It would seem that Dr. Thornwell felt the irresistible pressure of the obvious thought that a membership in no sense amenable to authority was an anomaly, and hence in his speech in the Assembly, and in his *Review* less distinctly, he advances this view: "People are brought into the church of Christ by fami-

lies, and hence, as the baptized unbeliever obtained his church connection through his parents, the church governs him only through the parent." We reply: it was not so in the Israelitish church, from which we have derived infant church-membership. In that church, and in its synagogue discipline, the youth himself, when come to years of understanding, and not only his parents for him, was held amenable to judicial authority. Again, at twenty-one years, the baptized unbeliever passes out of the parental authority in this country. What reason is there in Scripture or natural justice why he should at that date acquire an ecclesiastical license to sin without judicial penalty, and yet remain a member? Suppose the parent says to the church, "I have done all I can, and done it in vain." Because the son is wayward, does the church lose all jurisdiction, direct and indirect, while over less wayward children its indirect power remains? In fine, this doctrine is inconsistent with the fact that God's word treats every person who has come to years of discretion, as himself, an intelligent moral agent.

Dr. Thornwell also argues that judicial prosecution is inappropriate to one who professes no faith in Christ, because its utility is predicated on the possession of spiritual life by his subject. He says, to discipline a baptized unbeliever thus is as unreasonable as to tie a corpse to a whipping post and scourge it. The illustration is striking, but not just. It is incorrect to say that our system of government predicates discipline on the possession of spiritual life in its subject, and that its object is only to reclaim the backslider, and recall to repentance him who is regarded as still a true child of God, though erring. A just excommunication of a church-member proceeds on the supposition that he has now done something so thoroughly inconsistent and obdurate, that it shows he is not a true child of God. This is the very ground on which he is excommunicated; for surely no one should be excluded from the kingdom below whom Christ owns as a member of his family in heaven. Yet one object of this excommunication is the benefit of this *dead branch* thus lopped off. (See 1 Cor. v. 5.) How strange is the assertion made by Dr. Thornwell that there is no evidence that church discipline was ever intended to produce conversion! But more, if it may be the means of producing repentance in a

backslidden Christian, why may not the Spirit make it the means of producing repentance in a sinner?

In order to render this part of Dr. Thornwell's argument valid, he must not only show that discipline is inappropriate to produce repentance and conversion in a sinner; but he must show that these are the only ends of discipline. Now his own Revised Book says that the ends of discipline "are the rebuke of offences, the removal of scandal, the vindication of the honor of Christ, the promotion of the purity and general edification of the church, and the spiritual good of the offenders themselves." Grant that discipline cannot promote the spiritual good of baptized unbelievers themselves; this does not prove that it is irrelevant to their condition, for there is the important list of other ends—the rebuke of offences, the removal of scandal, the promotion of godly living—in which discipline is an entirely relevant means. Here we note another surprising assertion: that the bad morals of baptized unbelievers does not scandalize the church, because they do not profess conversion, and therefore need not be remedied by discipline. Let Dr. Thornwell read any of the arguments of Immersionists, and he will change his assertion. Their great, and alas! with our loose government, their plausible argument against infant baptism is, that it brings the unsanctified world into the church, crowding it with members who live as they list, in all sin and uncleanness, so that the line between church and world is obliterated. The only reason why any one does not instinctively feel the scandal arising from the tolerated crimes of an unbelieving church-member is, that in the observer's mind the proper conception of the sinner's real membership is obscured by Immersionist misconceptions. Here there is an unanswerable argument for the subjection of baptized unbelievers to discipline: that if they are church members in truth, the church must be armed with some instrument by which she may either incite them to that decent and orderly living, in advance of conversion, which is most favorable to their own change of heart, and which is imperatively demanded by the purity of the church, or else, if they will not hearken, may righteously rid herself of the scandal by lopping them off. This is the anomalous condition to which the doctrine of the Revised Discipline reduces the church: that she must own *all baptized persons* as members, and yet have

no sure means for either compelling them to live as such, or for ridding herself of them !

But it is objected, our view must lead to this consequence : that when baptized unbelievers come to the age of discretion, if they do not commune after being duly admonished, they shall be dragged before the session, and however moral, be punished for their failure by excommunication. This, it is said, will either drive them into a hypocritical communion, or will drive them off in indignation and disgust. We know not where such a portentous picture was found. We see no ground whatever to deduce it from the doctrine of our present Book ; but, doubtless, the notion that this was the only alternative to the doctrine of the Revised Book has had vast influence. Let every one, then, candidly consider whether the fair application of our system will not be the following : Those unconverted members who walk orderly in the church will be tenderly and faithfully instructed that it is their privilege and duty to embrace Christ, and thus pass out of that *ecclesiastical minority* to which they condemn themselves by their own unbelief. As long as they live morally, and attend the means of grace regularly, the privileges of that minor citizenship in Zion will by no means be cut off by expulsion. But there is one here and there who becomes openly profane, or otherwise criminal, or entirely neglectful of the instructions of the church. If he will not reform outwardly upon due admonition, let the church testify against his sins, and endeavor to arouse his slumbering conscience, or at least rid herself of his scandal by expulsion, just as though he were an unconverted communicant. The continued unbelief of those who live moral lives externally is a sin ; but it will not therefore be visited with expulsion, because the church already testifies against that sin by their exclusion from sealing ordinances—an exclusion concurred in by themselves. [And this is all, we presume, that was meant by those who called such persons self-suspended from communion. Nobody, so far as we are aware, has called them self-excommunicated.] Does not the honor of the church require this policy ? Would not a wholesome public sentiment sustain and admire it ? If the church had only consistency and diligence to wield her powers over *all her* members, not to force any one unprepared to the Lord's table, but to incite all members of all Christian families, as well

as communicants, to a life of outward purity and order, and to a regular attendance on her instructions; or else to cut off the rebellious members, how glorious would she appear as the minister of virtue and beneficence to man! How much more uniformly would the good conduct and church-going habits of her unconverted members prove to them the blessed stepping-stone to a real interest in Christ! How powerful the impulse which would be given to the heads of Christian families, in their efforts "to command their children and their households after them to keep the way of the Lord!" How would our Zion then "become a praise in the earth!"

But alas! we fear the strongest practical argument against the doctrine of our present Book is found in the difficulty of attaining its requirements, which we have created by our own neglects, inconsistency, and cowardice. Now we would affectionately ask our brethren, shall God's truth be degraded in our hands to the level of our corrupt practice? or shall his glorious truth be upheld by us, even though in doing thus we illustrate our own shortcomings, till its power and light enable us to repair that shortcoming?

The reader has been detained longer than we desired by these discussions. The importance of their subjects must be our apology. We trust we can take our patient friends to witness, that long as the discussions have been, we have not wasted time or ink in repetitions or unnecessary amplifications. And in closing, we would repeat our expressions of sincere respect for the distinguished men whose work is before the church for examination.

"CHRISTIANS, PRAY FOR YOUR COUNTRY."¹

OUR common country is in danger of *disunion*. It is almost with trembling that we note it, lest its very publication may tend somehow to familiarize our minds with the dread fact, and thus to precipitate it. We would fain hope that the danger is not inevitable, but only imminent; and *it is therefore* we now invoke the attention of Christians to it. If it is less urgent than some may fear, then there is more encouragement to labor now for its removal; for after its presence is confessed by all, it will be too late.

Remember, then, that this anti-slavery agitation has been growing from its ominous birth, for twenty-five years. What has been its career? It has constantly acquired more and more power; has overleaped every bar interposed by political sagacity to its extension, has very nigh swallowed up every other political question and party, has ruptured the ties of most of the Christian sects in the land, and has now nearly consummated the division of the people into two great parties of that *sectional* distinction of which the first symptom startled the sagacious Jefferson "like a fire-bell in the night." Its course has been, thus far, ever onward. It is no longer the narrow and comparatively impotent principle of *Abolition*, the war cry of a frantic fragment; but the grave, pervading, national question of *Free-soil*. On the one side stands the majority, saying, "The national domain belongs to the Federal government, of which we hold the effective control; and while we claim no right to dictate in your domestic concerns, we resolve that this common domain shall not be polluted by the encroachments of slavery." On the other side, the large and determined minority retorts: "This common domain was purchased by the money, toil, and blood, of us and our fathers, as well as by yours; and we will have our share in its enjoyment." Here are principles con-

¹Appeared as an editorial article in the *Central Presbyterian* of March 29th, 1856.

fronting each other of irreconcilable opposition. Meantime the strife is fanned by reckless faction-mongers, and by more guilty fanatics invoking the holy name of Christianity; and who that knows man's history does not know, that when national passions once clothe themselves in the garb of religion, they are as ungovernable as a storm and as implacable as death? We are fast tending to this, that the whole North will be arrayed against the whole South, on a question which each supposes essential to its honor, its religion and its existence.

And meantime, men are debating on both sides the miserable and guilty question, which section will be most prepared for a separate existence and for the strife it will have to endure; thus goading with insult on the one hand, and inflating on the other the arrogance which would precipitate the conflict; as though it were not sadly evident, that whichever side may be the weakest, it will yet have strength enough to inflict and endure miseries which might make angels weep. Already do the low mutterings of the rising cloud of civil war come from our Western border. Let that cloud break forth into the thunder of battle, and before the winds have swept its roar to the Atlantic, the angry passions now smouldering in magazine will be lit into universal blaze as if by the touch of lightning. Let those weapons, now pointed against each other in angry array be once lifted up to the nation reeking with fratricidal slaughter, and they will muster the foeman from North and South to the battle, like the fiery, red cross of Clan-Alpine.

And yet, the many wise and good, whose voices would otherwise be firmly raised for forbearance, are not aroused; because they see that the original agitators of the mischief are moved by principles so hollow and worthless, that they cannot think a great nation will be deluded by them; and because, seeing that all parties have so much to lose, and so little to gain by the strife, they will not believe that men can be so insane as to push on the suicidal contest to an issue. Alas! they forget that the power of bad men for mischief is out of all proportion to their own importance; and that when they play successfully on national passions, their own insignificance is lost amidst the might of the influences they arouse. Alas! they forget how often parties and nations have been seen to sacrifice self-interest, safety, existence, to the indulgence of inveterate sentiments. Did not

Girondists and Mountain-men wear out each other in France, in deadly strife, while the nation was reeling under the blows of combined Europe? Did not theological hatred cause Saxony to stand coolly by, while her sister Bohemia was beaten, disarmed, and trampled down, in the beginning of the thirty years' war, by Popish Austria, the common foe of them both? Did not the Jewish factions in Jerusalem strew the streets daily with the slaughter of civil battle, while Titus was thundering at the last defences of their last strongholds? Passion does not reason. Popular phrenzy does not count the cost.

Consider, then, we pray you, how portentous are all things of danger. Here are men urging on aggression with arrogant recklessness; there are others regarding their grievances, real or supposed, with the grim and gloomy determination to resist; here self-seeking demagogues, either blindly or treasonably, tamper with national passions whose awakened might they will be impotent to allay; and there men calling themselves ministers of the Prince of Peace invoke his sacred name to sanctify the guilty elements of strife and murder.

Second, if disunion comes, it must be accompanied or followed by war. Let no one fancy that such a rupture can be peacefully effected, and that two republics can quietly arise in place of one, to pursue their course with no rivalry but that of prosperous increase. If all the ties which now bind us together are insufficient to unite our hearts; if, in spite of them, such hostility has arisen as threatens to break the strong and beneficent bands of law and custom, to what heat will not that hatred grow when all these ties are broken? There will then be no genial meeting and mixing in our common seat of government, at our great watering places, and on the great thoroughfares, in ecclesiastical assemblies, and at our great commercial marts. It will be far easier for two foreign and rival powers to rupture a mere treaty of peace than it had been for sister commonwealths to cast off the dear and time-honored ties of family. Will the passions which break the latter respect the former; and that, too, when exasperated by a thousand new causes? And, upon a division, there must immediately arise a host of questions so grave, so essential to the very existence of each party, so without precedent or guide for their settlement, that it is only too certain the impatient temper of the times will at once hurry them to the bloody

arbitrament of the sword. Whose shall be the common seat of government, treasures and archives? Which confederacy shall inherit our ships of war, our armies and munitions? Where shall be the boundary line which is to separate into two the parts once intimately welded? Who shall control the lower course of the Father of rivers, the necessary and common thoroughfare of so many commonwealths? Will the North relinquish its navigation, and thus condemn themselves to commercial insulation and ruin? Will the South permit a stream which bisects its bosom to be the highway of rival and unfriendly foreigners? Who shall divide that vacant domain, the common property of both, which even now threatens to become the fatal subject of strife?

And above all, the seduction of fugitive slaves and their recapture, that festering sore of the body politic, will inevitably break out into fatal mischief just as soon as the constitution and the Union are removed. What are its difficulties? What the anger, bitterness, and agitation which it causes now? Every one can see to what these things must grow when all restraints of law are removed, when injured masters seek to redress their losses by the strong hand, and these attempts are resisted as invasion. All along our extended frontier, where the very intimacy of the previous union and neighborhood will aggravate the evil, there will be spread the flame of a border warfare. And the strife will extend to every creek, river, and bay of our sea coasts to which our coasting commerce penetrates.

And what a war will that be? Civil feud has ever been known as the most bitter of all. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." The very tenderness of brothers' love makes them more tender to the injury. The strength of the mutual obligations which should have bound them to offices of kindness enhances the hot indignation of mutual outrage. When the twin lands which now lie so intimately side by side, parted by a line so long, so faint, so invisible, that it does not separate, begin to strike each other, the very nearness and intimacy make each more naked to the other's blow. How dire, then, will be the conflagration of battle which will rage along this narrow line across the whole breadth of a continent! How fatal the blows, when the republican hardihood and chivalry, the giant strength and

the teeming wealth, which begin to make the mightiest despots respectful, are turned against each other! Some among us seem fond of placing the relative prowess and courage of North and South in odious comparison. Brothers! should we not rather weep tears of blood at the wretched and wicked thought, that the common prowess, which hath so often made North and South side by side carry dismay and rout into the ranks of common enemies, that terrible prowess, which, in North and South alike, withstood all the force of the British lion while we were yet in the gristle of our youth, and which, ever since, has overthrown and broken and pierced every enemy with the lion's force and the swiftness of the king of birds combined, should hereafter expend its might in fratricidal blows? And then this vast frontier must be fortified and guarded. This hostile neighborhood, so dangerous, because so intimate, must be watched on either hand by armies. This giant strength and enterprise, which were covering broad lands and broader seas with the blessings and fruitfulness of industry, must be diverted to the barren, devouring waste of warlike preparation and labor. These teeming fields, whose crops bless the granaries of the famishing nations, and cause their owners' bosoms to run over with wealth, must be sown with dragon's teeth, and rear crops of armed men! Farewell to the benign career of imperial *Peace*, by which we hoped the Empire Republic would teach the angry nations nobler triumphs than those of war. A long farewell to that dream we had indulged; dream not unworthy, surely, to have been inspired by the spirit of the Prince of Peace; that here a nation was to grow up, on this soil which God had kept till "the fulness of time was come," wrapped up in the mysteries of pathless seas, and untainted by the step of civilized despot or organized crime; a nation composed of the strong, the free, the bold, the oppressed of all other peoples, and like the Corinthian brass, more precious than any that composed it, which should come by the righteous arts of peace to a greatness such as at last to shame and frighten war away from the family of kingdoms, which should work out the great experiment of equal laws and a free conscience for the first time for the imitation of the world, and from whose bosom a free church, unstained by the guilt of persecution, and unburdened with the leaden protection of the state, should send forth her light and sal-

vation to the ends of the earth to bring the millennial morning. Our future growth will be swallowed by the devouring maw of strife. This cunning machine of law which now regulates our rights will be wrecked amidst the jars of revolution. The stern exigencies of danger will compel both the rivals, perhaps, to substitute the strong but harsh will of the soldier for the mild protection of constitutions. Christianity will sicken and droop amidst the crimes of national convulsion and the license of camps. Despots will sing their scornful pæans over the realizing of all their envious prophecies that our liberty would run into license, and our freedom be used for self-destruction. The world will be remanded to the guardianship of bondage, and the clock of time may be put back again for ages as long as those during which Europe before languished under the night of popery. And meantime the redemption of the race is by so many ages postponed; and sin and hell pray upon so many more of the teeming generations!

Christians of America, will ye suffer this? If such a crime against God and man be wrought in this land of thirty thousand evangelical ministers and four millions of Christians, how burning the sarcasm which it will contain against your Christianity! What, was there not enough of the oil of love in all these four millions of the servants of the God of love to soothe the surging billows of party strife? Was there not enough of the majesty of moral weight in these four millions of Christians to say to the angry waters, "Peace, be still?" Were not all these strong enough to throw the arms of their love around their fellow-citizens, keep down the hands that sought each others' throats, and constrain them by a sweet compulsion to be brethren? Did this mighty church stand idly by and see phrenzy immolate so many of the dearest hopes of man and so much of the glory of God on her hellish altar, and not rather rush between and receive the sword in its own breast? And this church knew, too, that the fiend had borrowed the torch of discord from the altar of Christianity, and that therefore Christians were doubly bound to arrest her murderous hand before the precious sacrifice was lost in the conflagration! If this be suffered, then shame on the boasted Christianity of America, and of the nineteenth century! With all its parade of light

and evangelism, wherein will it be less impotent and spurious than the false Christianity which permitted and sanctioned the butcheries of the Crusades, the torture of the Inquisition, or any other great iniquity of the dark ages?

For, brethren, you are able to control this nation, if you please, and will do your duty. Here are four millions of men and women, chiefly adults, among a people of twenty-six millions of men, women, children, and slaves; four millions who profess to be supremely ruled by principles of righteousness, peace and love, and to be united to each other in the brotherhood of a heavenly birth. If even the *voters* among these would go together to the polls to uphold the cause of peace, they would turn the scales of every election. Where is the community, in all our land, where the male citizens who are professors of Christianity would not give the victory to that party to which they gave their united support? But alas! how often do we go on Monday to the hustings, after having appeared on the Sabbath as servants of the Prince of Peace and brethren of all his servants, and in our political action forget that we are Christians? Here, then, is our first need, if we would save our country: that we shall carry our citizenship in the kingdom of heaven everywhere, and make it dominate over every public act. And next, the Christians of this country must sternly claim, that wicked men shall no longer hold the helm of state; that party fidelity shall no longer atone for that worst crime against citizenship, a wicked life. But why do we speak of the mere numerical weight of Christians? Let them, embracing so much as they do of moral weight and influence, but speak to public opinion with the calm voice of patriotism and moderation, and their words will be potential. Let every one of our thirty thousand pulpits echo the accents of that charity which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and let every one of these four million tongues speak to its neighbor the language of forbearance and long-suffering, and lo! there will be a great calm. Are we not brethren? What more does any one of us wish to exact of his brother, than that which is just and righteous? And what one of us desires to withhold this? But since we all know that human frailty is ever apt to over-estimate its rights, and to exaggerate its wrongs, let us each one resolve that, for our coun-

try's sake and our Saviour's, we will forego much of what seems to us our due, and endure much of what seems to us injury. Let us all resolve thus, and soon our only strife will be which side shall go farthest to meet the other in the magnanimous reparation of wrongs and the generous concession of rights. And, above all, should the guilty churches of all our land humble themselves before a holy God, for our Christian backslidings and our national sins. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and those that suck the breast; let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach."

THE CHRISTIAN'S BEST MOTIVE FOR PATRIOTISM.¹

"Because of the house of our Lord thy God I will seek thy good."—*PSALM cxlii.* 9.

THE true Christian feels the claims of patriotism as sensibly as any other man, though he holds them subject to the limitations of justice and charity to others. Thus, King David resolves that he will seek the peace of Jerusalem, the capital city of the Hebrew commonwealth; not only as a patriotic king, but from an additional religious motive. So the Christian has a motive for patriotism far stronger and holier than those of all other men. Additional to theirs, he has this reason to pray for the peace of Jerusalem: for his brethren and companions' sakes, and because of the house of the Lord his God which is in it. The kingdom of Jesus Christ—that blessed kingdom whose sceptre is peace, righteousness, meekness and truth, in whose prosperity the hopes of a suffering race are all involved, which alone can arrest the flood of sins and woes which now sweeps generation after generation into ruin—is committed by its Divine Head to human hands, and is partially dependent on the course

¹A sermon preached in the College Church, Hampden-Sidney, Va., November 1, 1860, a general fast-day, appointed by the Synod of Virginia, to pray for escape from national convulsions.

NOTE.—This sermon was delivered to the author's pastoral charge, under the circumstances indicated, and was printed and extensively circulated, precisely as it is now given, through many channels, in both sections of the United States. The preacher endeavored to bear in mind the truth, that if we would indeed propitiate God, the appropriate business for us, on a day of humiliation and prayer, is confessing our own sins, and not those of other people. He was afterwards mortified to perceive a total failure to appreciate this on the part of many, who circulated and used the sermon, not with a generous emulation in a similar exercise of candor and honesty; but only with the design of encouraging aggression, by the hope that Southern Christians would constrain their section to be acquiescent under any aggression whatever. It was printed at the unanimous request of the male part of the author's congregation, and may be, therefore, assumed to have been fairly representative of their opinions. A few months after, nearly every one of these persons (who was not beyond military age) was in arms. These, indeed, were, in the beginning of the recent contest, the sentiments of nearly all whom the wrongs of their opponents compelled to become the soldiers of the Confederacy. Hence it may be seen how exceedingly easy it would have been for moderation and justice in that quarter to have prevented the whole catastrophe.

of human events. This spiritual commonwealth among us, as is proper, has no legal ties to the secular, and no other relations than those of mutual good-will and courtesy. But still, inasmuch as Christ is pleased to leave to second causes their natural influence over his church, it is largely dependent on our secular governments. Now, there are few things which can affect the interests of Zion so disastrously as political convulsions and war. Let the Christian weigh their influences.

First, We are taught, even by experience of customary party excitements, that a season of political agitation is most unfavorable to spiritual prosperity. Few experienced pastors expect revivals during excited presidential canvasses. The mind is absorbed by agitating secular topics, angry and unchristian emotions are provoked, and the tender dew of heavenly-mindedness is speedily evaporated by the hot and dusty turmoil of the popular meeting and the hustings. Few men who traffic habitually in such scenes exhibit much grace. We suspect that the Christian, returning from a day of such excitement, is little inclined to the place of secret prayer. But how much must all these evil influences be exasperated when the subjects of political strife assume a violent and convulsive aspect? When every mind is filled by eager, secular concerns—when angry passions rage in every heart, dividing brother against brother in Zion—when unscrupulous haste precipitates multitudes into words and acts of injustice and wrong, agitating and defiling their own consciences, and provoking the hot tumults of resentment on either side—what room is there for the quiet and sacred voice of the Holy Spirit? It has been remarked by wise historians that a time of political convulsions is a time of giant growth for all forms of vice. And just to that degree it is a time of barrenness for the Christian graces.

But when political strife proceeds to actual war, then, indeed, do “the ways of Zion mourn.” War is the grand and favorite device of him who was a liar and murderer from the beginning, to obstruct all spiritual good, and to barbarize mankind. To all the above agitations, distractions and evil passions, raised now to actual phrenzy, must be added the interruptions of the Sabbath rest and of public worship, while the sacred hours are profaned with the tumult of preparations, marchings, or actual combats. Domestic life, that most fruitful source of all whole-

some restraints, is broken up by danger, fear, waste of property and separations. The youth hurry from that peaceful domain of humanizing and pious influences into the rude noise and gross corruptions of camps, whence they return, if they return at all, depraved by military license, unused to peaceful industry, and hardened to all evil, to poison society at home. Colleges and schools are scattered, the voice of science is silenced, the hopes of peaceful industry are violently destroyed, till recklessness and resentment turn the very husbandman into a bandit. And, above all, Death holds his cruel carnival, and not only by the sword, but yet more by destitution, by vice, by pestilence, hurries his myriads unprepared, from scenes of guilty woe on earth, into everlasting despair below. Need we wonder that the heavenly dove should spread its gentle wings, and fly far from such abhorrent scenes?

But civil feud has ever been known as the most bitter of all. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." The very tenderness of brothers' love makes them more tender to the injury. The strength of the mutual obligations, which should have bound them to kindness, enhances the hot indignation at mutual outrage. When the twin lands which now lie so intimately side by side, parted by a line so long, so faint, so invisible, that it does not separate, begin to strike each other, the very nearness and intimacy make each more naked to the other's blows. How dire, then, would be the conflagration of battle which would range along this narrow line across the whole breadth of a continent. How deadly the struggle, when the republican hardihood and chivalry, the young giant strength and teeming wealth, which begin to make the mightiest despots respectful, are turned against each other. Some seem to delight in placing the relative prowess of the North and South in odious comparison. Should we not, my brethren, rather weep tears of blood at the wretched and wicked thought, that the common prowess with which North and South have so often side by side carried dismay and rout into the ranks of common enemies—that terrible prowess which, in North and South alike, withstood the force of the British lion, while we were yet in the gristle of our youth, and which, ever since, has overthrown and broken every enemy, with the lion's force and the eagle's swiftness

combined—should hereafter be expended in fratricidal blows? And, then, this vast frontier must be fortified and guarded. This hostile neighborhood, so dangerous because so intimate, must be watched on either hand by armies; and these armies become, as among the unhappy and suspicious nations of Europe, as much the machines of internal oppression as of outward defence. Our future growth of men and wealth would be swallowed up by the devouring maw of strife. These teeming fields, whose increase fills the granaries of the famishing nations, and makes their owners' bosoms to overflow with wealth, must go to feed the barren waste of warlike preparation and labor. The source of half the missionary activities which now gladden the waste places of the earth would be dried up. Farewell to the benign career of imperial *Peace*, by which we had hoped the Empire Republic would teach the angry nations nobler triumphs than those of war. A long farewell to that dream we had indulged—dream not unworthy surely to have been inspired by the *Prince of Peace*—that here a nation was to grow up on this soil, which God had kept till "the fulness of time was come," wrapped in the mysteries of pathless seas, and untainted by the steps of civilized despots or organized crime; a nation composed of the strong, the free, the bold, the oppressed of every people, and, like the Corinthian brass, more precious than any that composed it; which should come, by the righteous arts of peace, to a greatness such as at last to shame and frighten war away from the family of kingdoms; which should work out the great experiment of equal laws and a free conscience, for the first time, for the imitation of the world; and from whose bosom a free church, unstained by the guilt of persecution and unburdened by the leaden protection of the state, should send forth her light and salvation to the ends of the earth to bring the millennial morning. This cunning machine of law, which now regulates our rights, would be wrecked amidst the storms of revolution. The stern exigencies of danger would compel both the rivals, perhaps, to substitute the strong, but harsh will of the soldier for the mild protection of constitutions. And the oppressors of soul and body, from every stronghold of absolutism throughout the earth, would utter their jubilant and scornful triumph: "Lo! the vain experiment of man's self-government has drowned itself in its own blood and ruin!" The

movement of the world's redemption might be put back for ages, and the enthroning of the Prince of Peace over his promised dominion, so long ravaged by sin and woe, would be postponed, while eternal death preyed upon yet more of the teeming generations.

Now, in view of this picture of possible crime and misery, would to God that I could reach the ear of every professed servant of Jesus Christ in the whole land! I would cry to them: Christians of America—brothers—shall all this be? Shall this church of thirty thousand evangelical ministers, and four millions of Christian adults—this church, so boastful of its influence and power; so respected and revered by nearly all; so crowned with the honors of literature, of station, of secular office, of riches; this church, which moulds the thought of three-fourths of our educated men through her schools, and of all, by her pulpit and her press; this church, which glories in having just received a fresh baptism of the Spirit of heaven in a national revival—permit the tremendous picture to become reality? Nay, shall they aid in precipitating the dreaded consummation, by traitorously inflaming the animosities which they should have allayed, and thus leave the work of their Master to do the devil's? Then, how burning the sarcasm which this result will contain upon your Christianity in the eyes of posterity! Why, they will say, was there not enough of the majesty of moral weight in these four millions of Christians to say to the angry waves, "Peace be still"? Why did not these four millions rise, with a LOVE so Christ-like, so beautiful, so strong, that strife should be paralyzed by it into reverential admiration? Why did they not speak for their country, and for the house of the Lord their God which was in it, with a wisdom before whose firm moderation, righteousness, and clear light, passion and folly should scatter like the mist? Were not all these strong enough to throw the arms of their loving mediation around their fellow citizens, and keep down the weapons that sought each other's hearts; or rather to receive them into their own bosoms than permit their mother-country to be slain? Did this mighty church stand idly by, and see phrenzy immolate so many of the dearest hopes of man, and of the rights of the Redeemer, on her hellish altar? And this church knew, too, that the fiend had borrowed the torch of discord from the altar of Christianity, and that there-

fore Christians were bound, by a peculiar tie, to arrest her insane hand before the precious sacrifice was wrapped in flames. Then shame on the boasted Christianity of America, and of the nineteenth century! With all its parade of evangelism, power, and light, wherein has it been less impotent and spurious than the effete religion of declining Rome, which betrayed Christendom into the dark ages; or than the baptized superstitions which in those ages sanctioned the Crusades and the Inquisition? In the sight of heaven's righteous Judge, I believe that if the Christianity of America now betrays the interests of men and God to the criminal hands which threaten them, its guilt will be second only to that of the apostate church which betrayed the Saviour of the world; and its judgment will be rendered in calamities second only to those which avenged the divine blood invoked by Jerusalem on herself and her children.

How, then, shall Christians seek the good of their country for the church's sake? This raises the more practical question of present duty, and introduces the more practical part of my discourse.

And first, Christians should everywhere begin to pray for their country. "Because of the house of the Lord our God, let us seek its good." The guilty churches of all our land should humble themselves before a holy God for their Christian backslidings and our national sins. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach."

And along with this should go humble confessions of our sins, individual and social. And here let me distinctly warn you, that I am not about to point your attention to sins of fellow-citizens of another quarter of the Confederacy, from whose faults some may suppose the present fear arises. Whether they have committed faults, or how great, it is not my present concern to say. Our business is to-day with our own sins. It will do our hearts no good to confess to God the sins of our fellow-men; He already knows them, and estimates them more fairly than

perhaps our prejudice will permit us to do. It is for our own sins alone that we are responsible to God. It is our own sins alone that we have the means of reforming, by the help of his grace. Let each man, then, consider and forsake his personal transgressions; for as your persons help to swell the aggregate of this great people, so your individual sins have gone to form that black cloud of guilt which threatens to hide from us the favorable light of our heavenly Father's face. But let us remember, and confess also, our social sins: that general worldliness which hath set up the high places of its covetous idolatries all over the good land God hath given us; that selfish profusion and luxury which have squandered on the pride of life so much of the goods of our stewardship; that heaven-daring profanity and blasphemy by reason of which the land mourneth. And let me not forget faithfully to protest, on such a day as this, against that peculiar sin of the southern country, the passion for bloody retaliation of personal wrong, which has been so often professed and indulged among us, unwhipped of justice. You have allowed too often the man of violence, the duelist, professing his pretended "code of honor"—most hateful and deceitful pretence of that father of lies, who was a murderer from the beginning—to stalk through the land with wrongs upon his angry tongue and blood upon his hand, while his crime was winked at by justice, and almost applauded by a corrupt public opinion. "So ye have polluted the land wherein ye are; for blood, it defileth the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." Let us remember, also, that our innocence or rightfulness in the particular point of present differences and anticipated collisions gives no assurance that God may not chastise us for our sins by those very events. Often has his manifold, wise, and righteous providence permitted an unjust aggressor to make himself the instrument wherewith to lash his sinning people, even when he afterwards punished the invader himself.

Second, We would say, with all the earnestness and emphasis which the most solemn feeling can inspire, let each individual Christian in our land, whether he sits in our halls of legislature or rules as a magistrate, or guides public opinion through the press, or merely fills the station of the private citizen, consider his own personal concern in this matter. We would affection-

ately individualize each man, and say to him, "My brother, thou art the man. Consider what would God have *you* to do?" Every Christian man, whether law-maker or law executor or voter, should carry his Christian conscience, enlightened by God's word, into his political duty in another manner than we have been accustomed to do. We must ask less what party caucuses and leaders dictate, and more what duty dictates; for the day is at hand when we shall be brought to an awful judgment for the thoughtless manner in which we exercise our civic function. My brethren, the Christians of this land are able to control the selection of reckless and wicked men for places of trust, if they please, and will do their duty. Here are four millions of men and women, chiefly adults, among a people of twenty-six millions of men, women, children, and slaves—four millions who profess to be supremely ruled by principles of righteousness, peace, and love, and to be united to each other in the brotherhood of a heavenly birth. If even the voters among these would go together to the polls to uphold the cause of peace they would turn the scale of every election. Where is the community in all our land where the male citizens, who are professors of Christianity, would not give the victory to that party to which they gave their united support? But alas! how often have we gone on Monday to the hustings, after having appeared on Sabbath as the servants of the Prince of Peace, and brethren of all his servants, and, in our political heats speedily forgotten that we were Christians? Let each Christian citizen have his independent political predilections, and support them with decision, if you please. Let them, if need be, render that enlightened and moderate allegiance to the party of their choice which is supposed to be essential in free governments. But when their party demands of them that they shall sustain men of corrupt private morals or reckless passions, because of their supposed party orthodoxy, let all Christians say: "Nay, verily, we would fain yield all reasonable party fidelity; but we are also partisans in the commonwealth of King Jesus, and our allegiance to him transcends all others. Unless you will present us a man who to party orthodoxy unites private virtues, we cannot sustain him." Then would their reasonable demand be potential in every party, and the abuse would be crushed. And this stand, if taken by Christian citizens, we affirm, would infringe no personal or asso-

ciated rights ; for is there any party who would admit that it had not a single member respectable, virtuous, and sober enough to deserve the suffrages of Christian men ? If there is, surely it is time it should slink away from the arena of political competition and hide itself in oblivion ! Here, then, is a prominent duty, if we would save our country, that we shall carry our citizenship in the kingdom of heaven everywhere, and make it dominate over every public act. We must obey the law of God rather than the unrighteous behests of party, to “choose out of all the people *able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to be rulers,*” or God will assuredly avenge himself for our violated allegiance to him. The Christians of this country must sternly claim that wicked or reckless men shall no longer hold the helm of state ; that political orthodoxy shall no longer atone for that worst offence against citizenship, a wicked life. And along with rulers I would include the directors of the public press as being of the general class of “leaders of the people.” Even while you boast of the potency of this engine of the nineteenth century, you have allowed it to fall, in many cases, into most incompetent and dangerous hands. See who have held this responsible lever in our land in these latter days ! Some are honorable and patriotic, but more are unreliable ; some mere half-educated youths, without any stake of family, estate, or reputation in the community ; some fiery denouncers ; some touching the springs of public affairs with a drunken hand ; and many the open advocates and practitioners of the duelist's murderous code—these men you have permitted, and even upheld and salaried, in your easy thoughtlessness, to misrepresent, misdirect, and inflame the public sentiment of the nation !

There are many reasons which demand of every God-fearing citizen that he shall sustain, directly or indirectly, none but honest and prudent men in places of influence. When you elevate a bad man, you give to him a hundred-fold more power of example to corrupt your sons, and your neighbors' sons, by his evil acts. Those acts are a hundred-fold more conspicuous and more weighty to attract notice and imitation than if you had left him in his deserved obscurity. When you delegate your money, influence or civic power to a bad man, you make his wicked official acts and influence your own ; he is your chosen

agent, and acts for you, and be assured a jealous God will not forget to visit the people for the guilt thus contracted.

But especially should you remember, at such a period as this, the boundless mischief wrought by the habit of reckless vituperation and the political violence in which bad and foolish or inexperienced men indulge to further political ends. It is this which chiefly has created our present unhappy dangers, by misrepresenting each section to the other. You have heard descriptions of the *reign of terror* in the first French Revolution, and perhaps as you saw the frightful and murderous violence of political factions there displayed, you have exclaimed, "Were these men or devils?" They were men, my brethren; "men of like passions with us." Read the narrative of the philosophic Thiers, and you will learn the source of these rivers of blood. Unscrupulous leaders of parties and presses, in order to carry their favorite projects and overpower political rivals, resorted to the *trick* of imputing odious and malignant motives to all adversaries; democrats denouncing Girondists and royalists as traitorous plotters of foreign invasion and national sack; royalists denouncing democrats as agrarians and robbers, till by dint of bandying the outrageous charges backwards and forwards, all minds were gradually embittered and prepared to believe the worst. Hence the bloody political proscriptions; hence the frightful butcheries of the *Septembriseurs*; because misguided men were taught to believe that no less trenchant remedy would anticipate the treason designed against the country.

Now, I say to you in all faithfulness, that the reckless and incapable men whom you have weakly trusted with power or influence, have already led us far on towards similar calamities. They have bandied violent words, those cheap weapons of petulant feebleness; they have justified aggression; they have misrepresented our tempers and principles; answered, alas, by equal misrepresentations and violence in other quarters, until multitudes of honest men, who sincerely suppose themselves as patriotic as you think yourselves, are really persuaded that in resisting your claims they are but rearing a necessary bulwark against lawless and arrogant aggressions. Four years ago an instance of unjust and wicked insolence was avenged on the floor of the Senate of the United States, by an act of ill-judged violence. And now, not so much that rash and sinful act of re-

taliation, but the insane, wicked and insulting justification of it generally made by Southern secular prints, directed by reckless boys or professed duelists, a justification abhorred and condemned by almost all decent men in our section, is this day carrying myriads of votes, of men who, if not thus outraged, might have remained calm and just towards us, for the cause whose triumph you deprecate. Thus the miserable games goes on, until, at last, blood breaks out, and the exhausted combatants are taught in the end, by mutually inflicted miseries, to pause and consider, that they are contending mainly for a misunderstanding of each other.

Now, I well know, my brethren and fellow-citizens, that if I should speak to you in private, you would all concur in my honest reprobation of this folly and injustice; I know that I have but expressed the common sentiments of all good men among us. Yet, in your dislike to be troubled, in your easy good nature, you let things take their course, under the wretched mismanagement of the hands into which they have fallen; you even permit your money and your influence to go, indirectly, in support of these agents of mischief and misrule, who thus misrepresent your characters, and aims, and rights. If the public interests cannot arouse you from this good-natured sin, let me see if I cannot touch you more nearly. Whereunto can all this mutual violence grow? Do not the increasing anger and prejudice, which seem so fast ripening on both sides for a fatal collision, tell you too plainly? And when these rash representatives of yours in our halls of legislation and our newspapers shall have sown the wind, who will reap the whirlwind? When they have scattered the dragon's teeth, who must meet that horrent crop which they will produce? Not they alone; but you, your sons, your friends and their sons. So that these misleaders of the people, while you so weakly connive at their indiscretions, may be indirectly preparing the weapon which is to pierce the bosom of your fair-haired boy, and summoning the birds of prey, which are to pick out those eyes whose joy is now the light of your happy homes, as he lies stark on some lost battle-field. For God's sake, then, for your own sakes, for your children's sake, arise, declare that from this day no money, no vote, no influence of yours shall go to the maintenance of any other

counsels than those of moderation, righteousness and manly forbearance.

Last: Every Christian must study the things which make for peace. All must resolve that they will demand of others nothing more than their necessary rights, and that in the tone of moderation and forbearance. Yea, that they will generously forego all except what duty forbids them to forego, rather than have strife with brethren. We must all be magnanimous enough to forbear the language of threatening and reproach, language which evinces no courage, to acknowledge the excesses of ourselves and our friends, and to make reparation for it, whether such reparation be offered on the other side or not. Instead of complaining in vindictive and bitter spirit of the extravagances of misguided men on the opposite side, each man should inquire whether there are not sinful extravagances on his own side; and when it is necessary to remonstrate, do it in the tone of wounded love, rather than of insane threatening. In one word, let each party resolve to grant all that is right, and ask nothing else, "and lo, there will be great calm."

A PACIFIC APPEAL TO CHRISTIANS.¹

AN ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE CHRISTIAN
CHURCHES OF THE COUNTRY.

DEAR BRETHREN: When evils so great impend over our beloved country every citizen should do his utmost to avert them; and especially should Christians seek the good of their native land, because of the house of the Lord their God which is in it. We have, therefore, presumed, humbly, but earnestly, to beseech your favorable attention to the following views touching the duties appropriate to the people of God in this day of rebuke:

The great sectional questions which divide the opinions of the North and the South seem at length to have reached their crisis. One State has formally retracted its allegiance to the Union, others are preparing to follow, and a tempest of excitement shakes the nation. "We are in the midst of a revolution, only bloodless as yet." But every day the complications assume a more angry aspect; a fatal current seems drifting all parties with frightful rapidity towards the bloody arbitrament of the sword. Daily the public heart stands still, expecting lest the next breeze which sweeps from the South come freighted with the resounding crash of civil war, which may soon be echoed from all other quarters. The counsels of our rulers seem to be turned into disappointment, and the lover of his country knows not whither to look for refuge, except to God. But in this extremity a cheering voice reaches us from the great city of New York in the form of a Christian appeal to the people of God in the South, and signed by twenty-six of the most beloved and venerable names among the clergy of various Christian denominations. A similar appeal is also issued by most revered and influential Christians from Chicago, in the great Northwest. The object of both is to summon God's people to

¹ Appeared in the *Central Presbyterian*. March, 1861.

the rescue of their country, and to the blessed work of peace-makers ; to hold out to us the right hand of love and sympathy across the chasm which threatens to divide our country ; to give us their solemn assurances that sectionalism and fanaticism are not dominant at the North, and to pledge themselves to the noble work of breaking the rising power, and restoring to us our rights in the Union. Stating the solemn conviction that the victory of truth and right over error can yet be secured if time and favorable auspices are allowed for the discussion there, they implore the South not to precipitate the rupture of the confederation before they are allowed to go behind the heated or interested partisans who have misdirected public opinion, and make the appeal to the honest and patriotic people. Every Christian at the South will concur in meeting these fraternal and generous advances in the spirit in which they are made. We know that we may bid our Northern brethren God-speed in their work in behalf of Southern Christians. We joyfully reciprocate their affectionate greeting, and pray God that they may be successful in moderating animosities, in removing misconceptions, in dispelling fanaticism ; and we entreat them to lose no time in a work so urgently needed to allay the just apprehensions of our people. But now, does it not become us, Christian brethren of the South, to coöperate in our sphere in the same peaceful work ? Have we no animosities to moderate, no misapprehensions to repudiate, no exaggerations of feeling and language to confess, and no advances to make towards a renewed fraternity ?

All Southern Christians would deplore an unnecessary rupture of the Federal Union bequeathed to us by our heroic sires, as marring their glorious work, and showing ourselves unworthy of their inheritance ; as bringing the gorgeous promise of the "Empire Republic" to an early and ignominious close ; as plunging the country into the inevitable evils of financial distress, and but too probably into the horrors of frequent wars ; as inaugurating on this hitherto peaceful continent the jealous political system of Europe, with its balance of power, its enormous standing armies, its crushing taxation, and ultimately, its despotic governments ; as covering the claims of American Christianity and republicanism with failure and disgrace before the world ; as destroying our national weight and glory, and thus our per-

sonal security abroad ; as disappointing the hopes of self-government throughout the nations, and justifying the claims of tyranny ; as bringing innumerable confusions, disruptions, and disaster upon the churches of Christ, and as arresting the beneficent labors of one-third of the missionaries and teachers, and drying up a similar portion of the charities which now carry life to the perishing souls of the heathen. Surely he who would risk even the possibility of a result so dire, unless impelled to do it by causes absolute and inexorable, hath not the heart of a Christian, nor even of a man. Do those causes, then, exist ? We would distinctly say, to avoid creating a mischievous mistake, that if the Southern States of the Union are persistently refused their full rights in the confederation and its common territories and the protection granted by the constitution to their peculiar property, then, in our opinion, the Southern people must conclude that these causes do exist, and that the catastrophe, however lamentable, must be met, sorrowfully indeed, and yet with the resolution of freemen. But, on the other hand, we cordially appreciate the honorable sincerity of the revered brethren of the North, who assure us that, in their opinion, the necessity for this ultimate resort does not yet exist ; and assuredly every motive should prompt us to hope till hope becomes impossible, that they judge correctly. We rejoice to see grounds for such a hope in the large and patriotic minority, approaching so nearly to half the Northern community, who, in the late presidential election, cast their suffrages with so much manliness in favor of our rights ; in the extensive reaction which has since appeared in public sentiment there ; in the persevering hopes and efforts of our wisest and most patriotic legislators to conciliate, and in the force of truth and right when fairly presented. Nor can we permit this hope to be extinguished by the pertinacity of the leaders of that misguided party which assails our rights ; when their conduct may be so fully explained by the personal exasperations of former political collisions, by their confident expectation that the imprudent haste of some part of the Southern people would compromise the justice of their cause before the nation, and by their full consciousness that the peaceful triumph of constitutional right would be the final downfall of their selfish ambition.

We can easily believe that these considerations may prompt

them to deny us justice; and yet that their constituents would be more just to us than these leaders who misrepresent them. Moreover, if sectional differences, so long and so keenly contested, had not produced many misconceptions on both sides, we should have been more or less than human, and our party history would be different from that of all other free nations. May not patience and serious discussion, in the presence of interests so solemn and tremendous, dissipate those misconceptions? Is there not still ground to hope that, if the Southern people would carefully avoid complicating their righteous cause by any undue haste, or by impinging upon existing laws, or even prejudices, more than the absolute necessities of self-defence require; if the great issue were carried back from embittered party leaders to the body of the citizens, disencumbered of all other questions of a change of administration and of public wealth which were recently mixed with it; if the North were asked whether she would yield to us a generous and fair construction of our equal rights and in the future punctually observe it, or whether she would force us to an unwilling but necessary self-defence outside the Union, the answer would be one which would restore peace to an anxious country?

Now, we would humbly urge upon you, dear brethren of the South, whether it is not due to our country, to our race, to our God, and due especially to the noble men who are entreating us to give them one more opportunity to achieve our rights and our peace for us by the weapons of argument, that we should withhold the irreparable step as long as there is a spark of hope? And to our brethren of the North and South alike, we would say, when that final step is so solemn and may be so awful, should not every honorable means for avoiding its necessity be exhausted by the good man before he takes it? Yea, even though we were uncertain whether the glimmer of hope were a true living spark, or only an illusion, would it not be better to wait till that uncertainty is decided than to incur the calamities of the extreme remedy, and afterwards be haunted perhaps by the remorseful discovery that we had precipitated them without actual necessity? We do not advise that any of the measures truly necessary for self-defence be delayed a single day; but we would respectfully plead that it would be eminently worthy of you as Christian citizens to seek the suspension of all

such measures as would cut off or embarrass the appeal from the rulers to the people of the North, as would causelessly embitter or complicate the existing differences; and, above all, such measures as would set on fire the destroying passions of civil war. It becomes us, even while we prepare for the worst, to look diligently on all sides for some mediating umpire, by whose impartial hand "the dogs of war" may be held in leash till the final verdict of the people is given. Surely God has not so given us over to madness, but the issue might still be that they should then be chained up forever, instead of being now let loose to rend our common mother. And further, we would humbly appeal to all Christians of the North and the South to exert everywhere the moderating influences appropriate to the followers of the Prince of Peace. It cannot but appear to the reasonable mind most unsuitable that Christian men and Christian ministers should be in the extreme front of party movements, when all history tells us that such movements never become heated without becoming extreme. In tempering the body-politic together, God has given to the Christian members a function like that of the conscience in the natural man, which regulates and moderates the whole. The movement of the common body is the resultant of many concurring forces, of which, if some are liable to be too sluggish, many are always too impetuous. The Christian may therefore safely conclude that his duty will be best performed by acting with the moderate, instead of the vehement. God's people are the *regulators* of the social machine. Shall they forget this most necessary and wholesome function and throw their whole momentum to hurry that motion which they should regulate?

Then nothing can be expected but that the machine will wreck itself with its own mad velocity. Let us then all study moderation of political sentiment, of resentments and of language. Let us keep a watch before the door of our lips, lest some needless word issue forth to exasperate what is already too angry. Let us see to it that we do not initiate the sin, nor share the guilt of those who have perverted the sacred influences of Christianity to sanctify their malignant feelings. Let the Sabbath, with its sacred calm, be reserved more jealously than ever for topics truly divine, in order that its recurring sanctities may aid in tempering the excitement of the people. For this is the wise

ordinance of him who "made the Sabbath for man," that this weekly breach in the current of our secular cares, and the sobering and elevating contrast of heavenly contemplations, might prevent the flow of earthly passions from becoming morbid and chafing the soul into phrenzy. It is usually found, that wherever the excitements of our weekly debates are allowed to intrude into the sanctuary, the pulpit and the Sabbath, a feverish exasperation of popular feeling results.

The urgency of our country's danger will be our apology for again beseeching you, dear brethren, to remember your Christian responsibilities to God and his church. Every man, whose heart is not harder than the nether mill-stone, will surely count the cost at such a time as this, and view deliberately the terrible results which may possibly or probably come from error now committed. Is disunion, is civil war before us, a civil war whose rigor and atrocities may appall the world? The wisest hearts admit the fear. Let each man then place himself now, before it is too late, in the midst of the possible horrors of that fratricidal war; let him bring before his mind a country ravaged; its fields, late smiling with plenty, stained by battle, and the carnage of fellow-citizens and brethren of a common Christianity; its cities sacked or deserted; its peaceful homes desolated, and its order displaced by fierce anarchy; and let him ask himself whether, as he stands amidst the ruin, he will be able to take heaven to witness that none of its guilt is in his skirts. Let each man remember that he must answer at the judgment seat of Christ for his conduct as a citizen, and see to it that when he meets there the ghost of all that shall be slain, of all the wives that shall be widowed, of all the children that shall be consigned to orphanage and destitution, of all the hoary parents that shall be bereaved of their sons in this quarrel, and of all the ignorant damned through our neglect, while we were waging the work of mutual destruction, he shall be able to appeal to the searcher of hearts that none of it was his doing; that every whit of this mountainous aggregate of guilt belongs to his adversaries, and not to himself; that he had exhausted every righteous expedient and exerted every lawful power to avoid it. If, brethren, you can do this, it will be well with you, however ill it may be with our miserable country. But if not, who can estimate that guilt! But, blessed be God, all is not yet

lost. And if only his church shall have grace given to her equal to her duty; if she can only rise above the vulgar mists of prejudice, false pride and mutual recriminations; if she shall steadily lift up the calm, loving and potential voice of God's law, speaking peace to the tumults of the people, and even to the incipient din of war; if the hands of Christian love are now made strong to knit again the bands which angry and selfish men have rent, how glorious will be this achievement of Christianity to her Lord, and how blessed to his creatures. Fellow Christians, let us arise as one man, and accomplish it.

And, finally, that this peaceful victory may be won, we would repeat the call to prayer. 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' Let us continue daily before the throne of the heavenly grace, those humiliations and entreaties to which we were called by our venerable Chief Magistrate, until God have mercy upon us, and the sword which is stretched out over the land is withdrawn. And we will be your servants, for Christ's sake.

To the foregoing appeal were appended the following signatures :

SAMUEL B. WILSON, D. D., Professor and President, Union Theological Seminary, Va.

JOHN M. P. ATKINSON, D. D., President Hampden-Sidney College.

B. M. SMITH, D. D., Professor Union Theological Seminary, Va.

ROBERT L. DABNEY, D. D., Professor Union Theological Seminary, Va.

REV. T. E. PECK, D. D., Professor Union Theological Seminary, Va.

REV. HENRY SNYDER, Professor Hampden-Sidney College.

REV. WM. BROWN, D. D., Editor of *Central Presbyterian*.

REV. GEORGE D. ARMSTRONG, D. D., Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, Va.

REV. JACOB D. MITCHELL, D. D., Second Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Va.

REV. JAMES C. CLOPTON, Pastor of the African Church, Lynchburg, Va.

REV. JOSIAH CLIFT, Methodist Protestant Church, Lynchburg, Va.

JAMES B. RAMSEY, D. D., First Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Va.

DRURY LACY, D. D., late President Davidson College, North Carolina.

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

W. H. MCGUFFEY, Professor of Moral Philosophy.

JOHN B. MINOR, Professor of Common and Statute Law.

H. HOWARD, M. D., Professor of Medicine.

S. MAUPIN, M. D., Professor of Chemistry.

M. SCHELE DE VERE, Professor of Modern Languages.

LEXINGTON, VA., *January 14, 1861.*

We the undersigned cordially concur in the general tone of sentiment and feeling expressed in the foregoing paper :

REV. WM. N. PENDLETON, D. D., Rector of Grace Church, Episcopal.

REV. F. C. TEBBS, Methodist Episcopal Church.

REV. WM. S. WHITE, D. D. Presbyterian Church.

REV. GEO. JUNKIN, D. D.,

PROF. J. L. CAMPBELL,

PROF. A. L. NELSON,

PROF. C. J. HARRIS,

PROF. JAMES J. WHITE,

JOHN T. L. PRESTON, Virginia Military Institute.

T. J. JACKSON, Professor, Virginia Military Institute.

Faculty of Washington College, Va,

RANDOLPH MACON COLLEGE, VA.

While we love the Union, and deplore the calamities which so seriously threaten our country, and while we highly appreciate the truly Christian forbearance and sentiments of justice embodied in the foregoing address, we must be allowed to say that we believe that nothing short of the decisive measures now before the people of the Southern States will cause many of our intelligent and calculating, but tardy, yet doubtless true friends at the North to *realize the fact* that we are in earnest in asserting our rights under the constitution and our beliefs on the moral aspects of the questions involved. And if these remedies fail to save the Union, we are still willing to take them as the least of impending evils, with a firm persuasion that we are not responsible for the ultimate results.

WM. A. SMITH, D. D., President of Randolph Macon College.

PH. W. ARCHER, Presiding Elder of Randolph Macon College.

GEORGE H. RAY, Chaplain of Randolph Macon College.

ON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY.¹

APRIL 20, 1861.

REV. S. I. PRIME, D. D.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER :

I TOOK occasion, as you will remember, in lifting up my feeble voice to my fellow-Christians on behalf of what was once our country, to point out the infamy which would attach to the Christianity of America, if, after all its boasts of numbers, power, influence, and spirituality, it were found impotent to save the land from fratricidal war. You have informed your readers more than once that you feared it was now too late to reason. Then I wish, through you, to lay this final testimony before the Christians of the North on behalf of myself and my brethren in Virginia, that the guilt lies not at our door. This mountainous aggregate of enormous crime, of a ruined constitution, of cities sacked, of reeking battle-fields, of scattered churches, of widowed wives and orphaned children, of souls plunged into hell—we roll it from us, taking the Judge to witness, before whom you and we will stand, that the blood is not upon our heads. When the danger first rose threatening in the horizon our cry was, “Christians to the rescue.” And nobly did the Christians of Virginia rally to the call.* Did you not see their influence in the patriotic efforts of this old commonwealth to stand in the breach between the angry elements? Yes, it was the Christians of Virginia, combined with her other citizens, who caused her to endure wrongs until endurance ceased to be a virtue; to hold out the olive branch, even after it had been spurned again and again;

¹ The following letter, originally published in the *Central Presbyterian*, of Richmond, Va., in 1861, and addressed to the Rev. S. I. Prime, D. D., one of the editors of the *New York Observer*, was deemed so pertinent to the then existing relations between the North and the South, that an association of gentlemen were led to republish it in pamphlet form, with the conviction that, by giving to it a more diffusive circulation, they would thereby render it the instrument of accomplishing great good in behalf of religion and patriotism.

to study modes of compromise and conciliation, until the very verge of dishonor was touched; to refuse to despair of the republic, after almost all else had surrendered all hope, and to decline all acts of self-defence even which might precipitate collision, until the cloud had risen over her very head and its lightnings were about to burst. So long-suffering, so reluctant to behold the ruin of that Union to which she contributed so much, has Virginia been that many of her own sons were disgusted by her delays and driven to fury and despair by the lowering storm and the taunts of her enemies. And those enemies (woe to them for their folly) mistook this generous long-suffering, this magnanimous struggle for peace, as evidence of cowardice! They said the "old mother of states and statemen" was decrepit; that her genius was turned to dotage; that her breasts were dry of that milk which suckled her Henrys and her Washingtons. They thought her little more than a cowering beldame, whom a timely threat would reduce to utter submissiveness. And thus they dared to stretch over her head the minatory rod of correction. But no sooner was the perilous experiment applied than a result was revealed as unexpected and startling as that caused by the touch of Ithuriel's spear. This patient, peaceful, seemingly hesitating paralytic flamed up at the insolent touch, like a pyramid of fire, and Virginia stands forth in her immortal youth, the "unterrified commonwealth" of other days, a Minerva radiant with the terrible glories of policy and war, wielding that sword which has ever flashed before the eyes of aggressors, the "*sic semper tyrannis*." Yes, the point of farthest endurance has been passed at length. All her demands for constitutional redress have been refused; her magnanimous, her too generous concessions of right have been met by the insolent demand for unconditional surrender of honor and dignity; her forbearance has been abused to collect armaments and equip fortresses on her border and on her own soil for her intimidation; the infamous alternative has been forced upon her, either to brave the oppressor's rod or to aid him in the destruction of her sisters and her children, because they are contending nobly, if too rashly, for rights common to them and her; and, to crown all, the constitution of the United States has been rent in fragments by the effort to muster new forces and wage war without authority of law, and to coerce sovereign States into adhesion, in

the utter absence of all powers or intentions of the federal compact to that effect. Hence, there is now but one mind and one heart in Virginia; and from the Ohio to the Atlantic, from the sturdy mountaineers, and her chivalrous lowlanders alike, there is flung back with high disdain the gauntlet of deathless resistance. In one week the whole State has been converted into a camp.

Now once more, before the Titanic strife begins, we ask the conservative freemen of the North, For what good end is this strife? We do not reason with malignant fanatics, with the mob whose coarse and brutal nature is phrenzied with sectional hatred. But we ask, where is the great conservative party, which polled as many votes against Abraham Lincoln as the whole South? Where are the good men who, a few weeks ago even, held out the olive branch to us, and assured us that, if we would hold our hands, the aggressive party should be brought to reason? Where is that Albany convention which pledged itself against war? If it is too late to reason, even with you, we will at least lay down our last testimony against you before our countrymen, the church, and the righteous heavens.

Consider, then, that this appeal to arms, in such a cause, is as dangerous to your rights as to ours. Let it be carried out, and whatever may have befallen us, it will leave you with a consolidated Federal government, with State sovereignty extinguished, with the constitution in ruins, and with your rights and safety a prey to a frightful combination of radicalism and military despotism. For what thoughtful man does not perceive that the premises of the anti-slavery fanatic are just those of the agrarian? The cause of peace then was as much your cause as ours. And if war is thrust upon us, you should be found on our side, contending for the supremacy of law and constitutional safeguards, with a courage worthy of the heroes of Saratoga and Trenton.

How horrible is this war to be, of a whole North against a whole South! Not to dwell on all its incidents of shame and misery, let us ask, who are to fight it out to its bitter issue? Not the tongue-valiant brawlers, who have inflamed the fued by their prating lies about the "barbarism of slavery;" these pitiful miscreants are already hiding their cowardly persons from the storm; and its brunt must be borne by the honest, the mis-

guided, the patriotic men of the North who in a moment of madness have been thrust into this false position.

How iniquitous is its real object—the conquest and subjugation of free and equal States! We have vainly boasted of the right of freemen to choose their own form of government. This right the North now declares the South shall not enjoy. The very tyrants of the Old World are surrendering the unrighteous claim to thrust institutions on an unwilling people. Even grasping England, which once endeavored to ruin the colonies she could not retain, stands ready to concede to her *dependencies* a separate existence, when they determine it is best for their welfare; but the North undertakes to compel its *equals* to abide under a government which they judge ruinous to their rights! Thus, this free, Christian, republican North urges on the war, while even despotic Europe cries shame on the fratricidal strife, and turns with sickening disgust and loathing from the bloody spectacle!

And what can this war effect, except mischief? Will it restore the supremacy of federal laws over the seceded States? Can you conquer the united South? Can you conquer the seven Confederate States? And when Virginia has joined her sisters, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, and they have rallied to their sides their stalwart daughters of the West, is there one abolitionist insane enough, in the fury of his sectional hate, to believe that he can conquer them all? Then what can this war effect, save to shed rivers of treasure and of more precious blood, to plant the seeds of national hatred which are to bear fruits in other wars for centuries, and to rend this Union forever beyond the hope of reconstruction? Why, then, do you go to war with us?

Let it not be replied, that it is South Carolina which has first gone to war with you, and that Virginia has made herself *particeps criminis* by refusing to permit her righteous chastisement. This is what clamoring domagagues say; but before an enlightened posterity, as before impartial spectators, it is false. And here let us distinctly understand the ground the conservative North means to occupy as to the independence of the States in their reserved rights. If you do indeed construe the Federal compact so that a ruthless majority may perpetrate unconstitutional wrong, may trample on the sacred authority of the Su-

preme Court, and may pervert all the powers of the Federal government, instituted for the equal good of all, to the depression of a class of rights as much recognized by the constitution as any other, and the minority have no remedy except submission; if you mean that sovereign States, the creators by their free acts of these Federal authorities, are to be the helpless slaves, in the last resort, of their own servants; if you mean that one party is to keep or break the compact as his arrogance, interest, or caprice may dictate, and the other is to be held bound by it at the point of the sword; if you mean that a sovereign State is not to be the judge of its own wrong and its own redress when all constitutional appeals have failed, then we say, that it is high time we understood each other; then was this much-lauded Federal compact a monstrous fraud, a horrid trap; and we do well to free ourselves and our children from it at the expense of all the horrors of another revolutionary war. The conservative party in the North declared, with us, that the platform of the Black Republican party was unconstitutional. On this their opposition to it was based. They proclaimed it in their speeches, they wrote it on their banners, they fired it from their cannon, they voted it at the polls, that the Chicago platform was unconstitutional. And now that this platform has been fixed on the ruins of the constitution, and its elected exponent has declared from the steps of the Capitol that the last barrier, the Supreme Court, is to be prostrated to the will of a majority; now that the conservative party of the North has demonstrated itself (as it does this day by its succumbing to this fiendish war-phrenzy), impotent to protect us, themselves, or the constitution (the constitution overthrown according to their own avowals), are we to be held offenders because we attempted peacefully to exercise the last remaining remedy, and to pluck our liberties and the principles of this constitution from the vandal hands which were rending them all, by a quiet secession? Nay, verily! Of all men in the world, the conservative men of the North cannot condemn that act, for they have *declared* the constitution broken, and they have *proved themselves* incompetent to restore it. And least of all should Virginia be condemned for this act, because she magnanimously forebore it till forbearance was almost her ruin, and until repeated aggressions had left no alternative. Yet more, Virginia cannot be condemned, because, in the ordinance of

1787, in which she first accepted the constitution, she *expressly reserved* to herself the right to sever its bonds whenever she judged they were used injuriously to her covenanted rights. It was on this condition she was received into the family of States; and her reception on this condition was a concession of it by her partners. From that condition she has never for one hour receded. Witness the spirit of the Resolutions of 1798, 1799. And now, shall she be called a covenant-breaker because she judges that the time has come to exercise her right expressly reserved? Nay, verily.

If, then, we have the right of peaceably severing our connection with the former confederation, and the attempt has been made by force to obstruct that right, *they who attempted the obstruction are the first aggressors*. The first act of war was committed by the Government of Washington against South Carolina, when fortresses, intended lawfully only for her protection, were armed for her subjugation. That act of war was repeated when armed preparations were twice made to reinforce these means of her oppression. It was repeated when she was formally notified that these means of her oppression would be strengthened, "peaceably if they could be, forcibly if they must." And then, at last, after a magnanimous forbearance, little expected of her ardent nature, she proceeded to what was *an act of strict self-defence*—the reduction of Fort Sumter.

But, it is replied, the seceding States have committed the intolerable wrong of seizing Federal ships, posts, property and money, by violence! And whose fault is this? Had the right of self-protection outside the Federal constitution been peaceably allowed us, after our rights had been trampled in the mire within it, not one dollar's worth would have been seized. All would yet be accounted for, to the last shoe-latchet, if the North would hold its hand. The South has not seceded because it wished to commit a robbery. As for the forts within their borders, the only legitimate use the United States could have for them was to protect those States. When we relinquish all claims on that protection, what desire can the Federal government have to retain them, save as instruments of oppression? But you say they were forcibly seized! And why? except that the South was well assured (have not events proved the fear well grounded?) that a purpose existed to employ them for her

ruin. My neighbor and equal presumes to obstruct me in the prosecution of my rights, and brandishes a dirk before my face; when I wrench it from his hand to save my own life, shall he then accuse me of unlawfully stealing his dirk? Yet, such is the insulting nonsense which has been everywhere vented, to make the South an offender for acts of self-defence, which the malignant intentions disclosed by the Government of Washington have justified more and more every day.

But it is exclaimed: "The South has fired upon the flag of the Union!" Did this flag of the Union wave in the *cause of right*, when it was unfurled as the signal of oppression? Spain fired upon the flag of France when Napoleon laid his iniquitous grasp upon her soil and crown. Did this justify the righteous and God-fearing Frenchman in seeking to destroy Spain? Let the aggressor amend his wrong before he demands a penalty of the innocent party who has only exercised the right of self-defence.

It is urged again: If the Union is not maintained, the interests of the North in the navigation of the Gulf and the Mississippi, in the comities of international intercourse, in the moneys expended in the Southern States for fortifications, may be jeopardised. I reply, it will be time enough to begin to fight when those interests are infringed. May I murder my neighbor because I *suspect* that he may defraud me in the division of a common property, which is about to be made, and because I find him now more in my power? Shall not God avenge for such iniquity as this?

But it is said, in fine, "If the right of secession is allowed, then our government is only a rope of sand." I reply demonstratively, that the government of which Virginia has been a member has always had this condition in it, as to her; for her right to go out of it whenever she judged herself injured by it was expressly reserved and conceded from the first. Her reception on those terms was a concession of it. If you say that the people of the North are not aware of this, then the only reply we deign to give is, that it is no one's fault but yours that you have allowed yourself to be misled by rulers ignorant of the fundamental points in the history of the government. Now my argument, and it is invincible, is this: that the connection of Virginia with the Federal government, although containing always

this right of secession for an infringement of the compact, has been anything else, for eighty years, than a rope of sand. It has bound her in a firm loyalty to that government. It has been a bond which nothing but the most ruthless and murderous despotism could relax; a bond which retained its strength even when it was binding the State to her incipient dishonor and destruction. Surely it is a strange and disgraceful fact, that men who call themselves *freemen* and *Christians* should assume the position, that no force is a real force except that which is cemented by an inexorable physical power! Do they mean that with them honor, covenants, oaths, enlightened self-interest, affections, are only a rope of sand? Shame on the utterance of such an argument! Do they confess themselves so ignorant that they do not know that the physical power of even the most iron despotisms reposes on moral forces? Even a Presbyterian divine has been found to declare, that if our Federal compact has in it any admission of a right of secession, it is but a *simulacrum* of a government. Whereas, all history teaches us, that if the basis of moral forces be withdrawn from beneath, the most rigid despotism becomes but a *simulacrum*, and dissolves at the touch of resistance. How much more, then, must all republican government be founded on moral forces, on the consent, the common interests, and the affections of the governed. While these remain, the government is strong, and efficient for good; when they are gone, it is impotent for good, and exists only for evil. As long as the purposes and compacts of the Federal institutions were tolerably observed by the North, that government knit us together; with moral bands, indeed, yet they were stronger than hooks of steel. The North has severed them by aggression, and they cannot be cemented by blood.

Why then shall war be urged on? No man is blind enough to believe that it can re-construct the Federal Union on equitable terms. It is waged for revenge, the gratification of sectional hate, to solace mortified pride, to satiate the lust of conquest. From these fiendish passions let every good man withdraw his countenance. It is a war which the constitution confers no power to wage, even were the secession of the South for insufficient cause. The debates of the fathers who framed it show that this power was expressly withheld—even the Federalist, Hamilton, concurring strenuously. This war has no jus-

tification in righteousness, in any reasonable hope of good results, in constitutional law. It is the pure impulse of bad passions. Will the good men of the North concur in it?

I desire, through you, my dear brother, to lay down this last protest on that altar where the peace of the land is so soon to be sacrificed. I claim to be heard. If the reign of terror exercised by the mobs of your cities has indeed made it dangerous for you to lay before your fellow-Christians the deprecatory cry of one who, like me, has labored only for peace, then tell those mobs that not you, but I, am responsible for whatever in these lines is obnoxious to their malignant minds, and bid them seek their revenge of me—not of you—at that frontier where we shall meet them, the northernmost verge of the sacred soil of Virginia. And if you find that the voice of justice and reason is no longer permitted to be heard in the North, that the friends of the constitution cannot lift their hands there with safety in its defence, then we invite you, and all true men, to come to this sunny land, and help us here to construct and defend another temple, where constitutional liberty may abide secure and untarnished. For you we have open arms and warm hearts; for our enemies, resistance to the death.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN UNION?¹

THE divisions of Protestantism have been often charged as its *opprobrium*. No one who is governed by the principles of the gospel can fail to deplore the bitterness and injustice of Christians towards each other, which have too often attended their unavoidable differences. Every right-minded Christian, accordingly, rejoices in the legitimate means for increasing and evincing the spiritual unity of the whole body of God's people. Where this can be done without compromising conscientious convictions, we hail it as an unmingled blessing to our common Zion.

The Utopian dream of the manifestation of the unity of spirit of the whole body of believers in a universal church union is, however, just one of the prevalent whims of our day. The modern, and especially the American, mind seems to be prone to such epidemic distempers; and we now see the Christian world, in certain populous parts of this country, morbidly excited with the claim that Protestantism must manifest its Christian unity as popery does; or else be justly obnoxious to the charge of schism, and remain weak before its thoroughly organized adversary.

That all true followers of a common Lord should be one in aims, in spirit, in affection, no one can doubt. The question is, whether their reduction under a single church government and name is necessary to this Christian unity. Or, to borrow the current phrase of the day, whether *an organic unity* is necessary therefor.

I readily admit, at the outset, that this conclusion is not unnatural for those who regard it from a certain point of view. And a wide and intelligent survey of the history of the church will convince you that this conviction did actually haunt and pervert the thinking of the Christian world for centuries; and

¹This article was printed in the *Central Presbyterian*, May 11 and 18, 1870.

that it was one of the most difficult of tasks to make even the Protestant world unlearn it. Through all the ages of the prelatie fathers, and of popery, men not unaturally reasoned thus: "Since there is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism,' must not the visible church be *one*? Christ is its head; the church is his body. Can one head be united to more than one body, except it be a formation as monstrous as the fabled Cerberus? Is Christ divided? This cannot be. If, then, any sect exists, it and the body from which it is sundered cannot both be Christ's church. The original body must say to its severed branch: Inasmuch as you refuse to be one with us, your claim to be a church of Christ must needs unchurch us. If you are Christ's, we cannot be. If we are Christ's, you must be an anti-Christian body; and so, guilty of the damning sin of schism." Such arguments received obviously a new enforcement when the patristic doctrine was developed, that the graces of redemption are transmitted only through the church sacraments, and that these cannot be administered at all save by the men who hold an unbroken official succession from the apostles, and their deputies. It was now urged in addition, that as the one Lord had but one college of apostles, who held the same office, and acted with the perfect unity of a common inspiration, there was but one line of succession, and one body in which the sacraments carried any vital grace. But as these ordinances were the only channels, they who had them not in their regular succession could not be of the church.

Now, when such reasoners looked back, it was not surprising that they should think they saw full confirmation of their conclusion. The Old Testament church had been *one*, in outward form as in principles, throughout the ages of the theocracy. The church formed by the apostles had been one, bound together by a certain organic unity, as well as by a common faith and love. The great Œcumenical councils, the glory of the clerical orders, had industriously maintained this outward unity. Their creeds and canons claimed the allegiance, not only of the conduct, but of the heart, from the Indus to the Pillars of Hercules, and were rendered into the several tongues of the East and West. To maintain this outward unity was the great object of these pompous and costly assemblages, of all the controversies and persecutions, the anathemas and the laws of patristic ages. And

when at length the bishop of Rome usurped the title of Universal Bishop and God upon earth, it was chiefly to incorporate this visible unity in one office for all time. It is not strange, therefore, that to men whose minds were blinded by a false postulate, the idea of more than one visible church in one spiritual body should have seemed a self-evident absurdity.

Even the great Reformation failed to disabuse the minds of many Protestants of this delusion, although the precious principles which were its source should have exploded it at once. The notion that Christian unity could not exist unless all Protestantism was compressed within one church government, evidently complicated itself with Luther's almost frantic opposition to the Zwinglians. In 1527 the great Swiss Reformer addressed the German leader in a fraternal exposition of their disputes touching the Lord's supper, sustaining his own views and criticising those of Luther temperately; and while he intimated that he and his brethren were not prepared to abandon their conscientious convictions, he cordially offered a similar right to the Lutherans, and proposed that the two should maintain a Christian unity and peace amidst these lesser diversities. Luther's answer was in these words: "Well, since they thus insult all reason, I will give them a *Lutheran warning*. Cursed be this concord! Cursed be this charity! Down, down with it to the bottomless pit of hell! If I should murder your father, your mother, your child, and then, wishing to murder you, I should say to you, 'Let us be at peace, my dear friend!' what answer would you make? It is thus that the enthusiasts who murder Jesus Christ, my Lord, God the Father, and Christendom, my mother, wish to murder me also; and then they say, 'Let us be friends!'" How many inconsistent and scandalous persecutions Protestants have since employed against brother Protestants, in the vain attempt to enforce outward conformity, I need not remind you.

All who hold the scriptural principles of the Reformation, at least, should have remembered that Judaism was a religion for one little nation, while Christianity is for all continents and languages. They should have bethought themselves, yet more, that there was a practical agency existent in the Hebrew Church and in the apostolic for preserving an organic unity consistent with fidelity to truth, the presence, namely, of the infallible Spirit of

revelation, speaking through the *Urim and Thummim*, and through the prophets in the one, and through the inspired apostles in the other. Then, indeed, there may have been reason for holding that even a diversity in unity was without excuse, because there was present in the church an infallible umpire, the spirit of prophecy, to which disputants on any point of theology or church order, however subordinate, might appeal, and from which they would receive the answer of God himself, which made farther difference inexcusable. But now that the Spirit of infallible revelation is confessedly withdrawn from the church, and God has seen fit to leave Christendom to the guidance of the Bible alone, enjoining at the same time sincerity of conviction and a sacred respect for the spiritual liberty of every soul from every authority in divine things save his own, how inevitable, how obvious, is it that a diversity in unity must emerge and must be tolerated? The wish to enforce a universal organic unity deserts the foundation principles of the Reformation. Does not Rome prove it? She claims the right to enforce that outward oneness; she holds that it is essential; her system is precisely the legitimate result of the delusion I combat, and she tacitly admits, by the claim of infallibility, that the presence of this gift in the visible church is the only reasonable foundation of uniformity.

But the history of this delusion is especially instructive, as it shows us that its advocates from the first were chiefly led astray by disregarding the scriptural distinction between the visible and invisible church. In the controversies of the early ages against the Montanist, the Novatian, the Donatist sects, as in the pretensions of Rome now, this difference is quietly but totally omitted. Those Scriptures which do beyond dispute teach us that the invisible and spiritual church of Christ is one, "even as he and the Father are one"; that it is his body; his spouse and bride; catholic; *i. e.*, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; that it is holy; that it is indefectible; all these Scriptures were quoted as though they applied to one organized, visible body of believers, and thence were drawn the tremendous and false consequences of the damning sin of all formal diversity, the necessity of outward conformity, the propriety of pains and penalties to enforce it. Search and see! It is the same false logic which inspires this modern furor for *unification*.

Now, more attentive inspection of sacred Scripture will show us that the word "church" (ἐκκλησία) there bears two meanings, related, but not identical. In its higher, truer sense, the church is the body of the called of the Holy Spirit, the aggregate of Christ's redeemed and regenerate people. Its bond of union is not outward, but inward—a living faith and love. Its attributes are not the organic forms and canons and offices which man administers, but the graces which the divine Spirit in-works in the sanctified souls. As the soul of a man is the true man, so this spiritual company, which cannot be numbered nor bounded by human hands, is the true church of God. But as the intelligent soul, for a time, inhabits and uses a body inferior to itself, animal, even material, characterized by dimension and figure, so it is the divine will that this true church shall inhabit an outward form, a human society, which it makes the rude and imperfect instrument of its corporate functions. And as we naturally speak of a corpse as a dead *man* (although, apart from the informing spirit, it is no *man*, but a *clod*), so the same word, "*churches*," is also applied to the aggregate of these societies which the church universal and spiritual now on earth inhabits. You may remind me that still, as there is this relation, there should be some resemblance between the visible shell and the spiritual body. I freely concede it. The perfection of any one visible church, or the perfection of the great aggregate of visible churches, is to approach as near as may be to the qualities of the invisible church. They cannot possess these qualities, for reasons similar to those which forbid the shell *to be the kernel*, the body *to be the intelligent spirit* within it; but they will properly strive towards those attributes, so far as the body may towards the properties of the soul it contains. As the invisible church is truly holy, the visible will seek, by a scriptural discipline, to be as holy as its outward nature permits. As the invisible church is one and catholic, the visible will strive towards the same unity. But as the bond of union in the invisible church is a common faith and love, and no outward organism, so the unity of the visible church will evince itself in ties of affection and brotherhood rather than in external conformity. You will pardon my borrowing from an old book the following words, which express my meaning better than my own:

I. "The catholic or universal church, which is invisible, con-

sists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ, the head thereof; and it is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

II. "The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation, as before, under the law), consists of all those throughout the world *that profess the true religion*," etc.

But let us not rest this important distinction upon mere assertion. I refer to the New Testament to find the meaning of the word church, and I there find clear evidences that, in its true and full sense, the church is the spiritual and invisible company of true believers. The word church is the "out-called" (ἐκκλησία). But the true calling of God is not an outward profession, or the assumption of outward forms, but the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, bringing men to Christ in true faith. 2 Tim. i. 9: "God hath saved us, and called us with an *holy calling*, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace." Heb. iii. 1: They are "partakers of the *heavenly calling*." Rom. viii. 30: "Whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Now, the argument seems almost as plain as a truism that the church (ἐκκλησία) is the body of the called (κλητοί); and as this call is the grace which converts, the church is the company of the converted.

The church is the "the body" of Christ. (Eph. v. 29 and 30; Col. i. 24.) Christ is the source of spiritual life. The influences by which he animates his body are gracious and spiritual. The body must then be a gracious and spiritual one. Who can tolerate the assertion that any member of this body, united to this divine life-giving Head, is yet dead in trespasses and sins? Is the sacred whole infected with gangrene? It would be impiety to think it.

The church is the temple of Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood," etc. And this figure of speech Peter uses after the example of his Redeemer. Matt. xvi. 18: "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now, since the church is a spiritual house, and its members living stones, it is plainly

an invisible and spiritual company. It is also here declared to be an indefectible body: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It is Christ's sheepfold, "which none is able to pluck out of his Father's hand." But a part, alas! of every visible church, according to our Saviour's own testimony, does perish. Of the ten virgins who outwardly went to meet the bridegroom five were foolish and were shut out. Hence this true church must be the hidden company of the redeemed. See also Acts xx. 28.

Again, this church is the bride and spouse of Christ. Eph. v. 23: "For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church," etc. Does Christ unite impurity or death to himself in this intimate and spiritual union? Surely this spouse can be none other than the sanctified! But let the apostle settle this, vs. 25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Now, as there is, and can be, no visible body of professed Christians, on whatsoever theory organized, which is without spot, wrinkle, or blemish upon its holiness, but the purest of such bodies include many men who live and die in sin, this church, which is the spouse of Christ, must be the spiritual company of the regenerate. Let the Apostle John decide this. He witnessed in prophetic vision the day when the "marriage of the Lamb came, and his wife made herself ready. And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; and the linen *is the righteousness of the saints.*" (Rev. xix. 7, 8.)

And once more; the spiritual and invisible nature of this body is proved by the definitions of its character. Luke xvii. 21: "The kingdom of God is *within you.*" Rom. ii. 28: "He is a Jew who is one inwardly," etc. Rom. xiv. 17: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The church of God in its true sense, then, is not a society of men separated from the world by the hands of man, through outward governments and forms, but the hidden company of the regenerate. This is the glorious body, completely visible to

the eye of God, partially discernible by the eye of man, but impossible to be strictly separated and defined by any human marks ; this is the church, which is catholic, which is one, which is holy, which is indefectible ; out of which there is no salvation. . It is by seizing these attributes of the immortal, spiritual body of Christ, and attempting to apply them to the poor earthly shadow, a particular visible church, that all the mischievous errors of spiritual despotism have been evolved.

Yet it is of divine appointment, as well as of necessary consequence, that visible organized societies shall exist, for the gathering together and inhabitation of this spiritual company ; and to these societies the same holy name is by accommodation given in the plural number. The Scriptures call them *churches*. As with the true body, of which they are shadows, their highest bond of union is not an outward organism, but a bond of faith and affection. They together constitute the visible church catholic. None of the parts are perfect. Some of them have from time to time become so corrupt as to cease to be true parts of Christ's visible kingdom. The more they approximate the Bible standard, the more will they approach each other, not only in community of faith and love, but even in outward form. Meantime, their separate existence beside each other does not mar the catholicity of the visible church as one whole, but is the inevitable and designed result partly of the separation of the human race by seas, continents, civil governments and diversity of languages, partly of the excusable limitations of the human understanding, and partly of the sinful prejudices of the heart ; prejudices which, although not justifiable, will assuredly continue to operate as long as man's nature is only partially sanctified. The native good sense of the people has happily expressed the truth here, by calling these different societies, not sects, nor schism, but *denominations* of Christians. Pounds and guineas, shillings and crowns are all money, the lawful coin of the realm ; these are only different denominations of money. Cavalry, infantry and artillery are but different denominations of soldiers, making one patriot army. The fact that some fight on foot and some on horseback makes no necessary schism ; but all coöperate. This is the proper conception of the distinction between us as Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, in the one visible church cath-

olic. We are but different denominations of citizens in one kingdom.

And this I hold to be the conception of the visible church which the apostles designed to convey ; this I hold to be the development of the visible church which they expected and designed. The very symbols of prophecy confirm it. Under the old dispensation, the candlestick or lamp which symbolized the church was one. In the Revelation there are seven (i. 20), "And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are seven churches"). The nomenclature of the New Testament is significant of the same truth. So long as the word "church" is employed as the name of the spiritual body of the redeemed, it is always in the singular number ; and when applied to a visible society of Christians living in one city, and capable of having actual communion with each other in public worship, the word is also in the singular number. But the moment it is used to denote any wider aggregation of Christians in organized bodies, it always, save Acts ix. 31, becomes plural. We read of the seven *churches* of Asia, not of the church of Asia ; of the *churches* of Galatia, the *churches* of Macedonia, the *churches* of Judea ; but the New Testament says nothing of any visible national *church*.

But did not the organized bodies of Christians of the same nation and language, soon after the apostolic times, have a more comprehensive bond of outward connection ? They did. And I am not unwilling to admit that the liberal and modest rule of the early synods and councils was a legitimate substitute for the regulative authority of the apostles, now removed by death. But two things are admitted touching these synods : that in the purer ages of the ancient church they neither claimed, nor did the Christian people concede to them, any power of enjoining duties or making moral laws beyond the authority of sacred Scripture, and that each Synod was coördinate with and independent of all the others. No governmental tie bound them together ; they were united by no other ties than those of mutual respect and affection ; yet members or ministers from one province received admission to free communion with the Christians of another. It is a striking fact that even after metropolitan powers were generally conceded to the bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, there were large communions, those of

North Africa, Persia, Chaldea, and Britain, for instance, which did not send delegates to the archiepiscopal councils nor pay allegiance to their canons ; yet were they not regarded as schismatic, but were considered as parts of the church catholic until a more corrupt age. The associated Christians of different provinces then presented practically very much the aspect which is shown by the evangelical sister denominations of the Protestant world. They did not observe a complete outward uniformity, but were distinguished by differences in different countries at least as broad as those which separate us. They did not pretend to preserve any organic unity. Yet they never dreamed, during the purer ages of Christianity, of charging each other with schism ; and they considered the aggregate of the whole, united only by Christian courtesy and community of principles, as the visible church catholic. The most learned Christian antiquaries will be least inclined to dispute this view of early Christianity.

And this structure of catholic Christianity, I assert, is the designed development of the apostolic institutions, because there are causes, beyond the power of man to remove, which render it unavoidable. These causes existing, the attempt to compel an organic unity only results in greater mischiefs. To evince this I only have to compare three facts. One is, that the church has among men no infallible expounder of that Bible which is its sole rule of faith and order. The second is, that God hath left the conscience of his people free from the doctrines and commandments of men, and requires of believers that conduct which is dictated by their own intelligent and conscientious convictions. And the third is, that men, being fallible, always have differed, and always will honestly differ in details. How vain is it to expect anything else, when we look soberly over the past history of opinion ; when we remember that the different races are reared under different climes, languages, political institutions, and social usages, all of which have an unavoidable effect upon their habitudes of thought ; when we consider the limitation and weakness of man's understanding ; and, above all, when we bear in mind that he is at best a sinner, imperfectly sanctified, with passions and prejudices still subsisting. Men cannot be made to think exactly alike, if they think honestly, and this simply because they are men. In those communions which enforce

an external unity, the differences of belief are wider than between any two evangelical Christians in this hall, and if those divergencies are suppressed, it is only at the cost of a grievous tyranny over the conscience.

We must remember, also, that each visible church is a *witnessing body*, "it is a pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim iii. 15; see also Isa. ii. 3; lix. 21; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts xx. 24; Ps. lxxviii. 5; Rev. xii. 11, 12, 17; xix. 10). The great duty and function is to testify for God, and bear his message to an apostate world. To fail of this is to cease to be a church at all. But I ask emphatically, how can men testify for God unless they testify what *they understand* God to say? They *must* speak; to be silent is treason. And in honesty they can only speak what they honestly believe. Hence it is, to the fair mind, the plainest thing in the world that the only practicable scheme of church association is that which unites in one denomination those who are honestly agreed, while it leaves to all others who differ from them the same liberty of association and testimony. Does a certain separation of the parts of the visible church catholic result? I answer, it is the least of the possible evils.

Especially would I protest against the remedy for this partial separation which is proposed by that latitudinarian view now called *Broad Churchism*. This is an expedient only less unprincipled and mischievous than persecution. "Why," asks this masked infidelity, "may not the same visible church embrace within its pale me and the man who believes wholly unlike me, allowing us both our equal liberty?" I answer: Because then the church bears no testimony for her God. The great, the sacred, the exalted, I had almost said the sole, organic function for which the visible church exists, witnessing for saving truth, is gone. No man could propose such an expedient seriously who had not already imbibed a Sadducean contempt for divine truth and become blind to its preciousness. And no church can commit itself to this dishonest policy without being infested with a blank and sardonic infidelity. History and common sense have both spoken on this point too plainly to be misunderstood. Commend me for ever to an honest, wrong-headed bigot, with all his faults, rather than to a Broad Churchman. The one has at least reverence and manhood enough in his nature to value *truth*, and when he *supposes* he has found the

priceless jewel, to do it hearty homage. The other is so coldly and meanly indifferent to its sacred claims that he is as willing to lend his associated power to sustain its foul enemy, falsehood, as truth itself. Broad Churchism delights to hurl the charges of Phariseeism, hypocrisy and malignity against the honest votaries of truth. But examine its *animus* and you will find that it is as hypocritical and bitter as it is cold. Selfish indifference does indeed make it very tolerant of all that which, if it had any sincerity, should excite its moral indignation; the only thing erroneous enough in its eyes to arouse its intolerance is honest conviction and zeal for God's truth. And against this it harbors all the gall and bitterness which it imputes to us.

I advance also this consideration: that the advocates of ecclesiastical amalgamations in our day show neither the temper, nor the success to encourage our confidence in them. We see no proof that their zeal for organic unity is prompted by true Christian charity. Let it be clearly understood that we except a number of well-meaning Christians, whose kindly hearts, more kindly than considerate, are beguiled by the professed cry of peace. But the spirit of the major part appears to be anything else than that moderation, fairness, and gospel affection, which promise a real union among Christians. We see no evidences of that catholic wisdom and justice which are large enough to embrace the whole kingdom of God on earth; but while the pretense is catholicity, the action has sometimes been as fanatical, as full of narrow prejudice, and as divisive as that of any sect which has ever really marred the unity of Christ's body. Thus we saw the great Evangelical Alliance of Protestant Europe, as it proudly styled itself, while sufficiently latitudinarian to embrace parts of the Reformed Church of France, which flout the most sacred principles of the gospel, the divinity and vicarious satisfaction of the Lord Jesus Christ, the fall of man, the work of the Holy Ghost, spurn American churches, the purest in creed and membership on earth, because they would not declare that relation of domestic servitude criminal in which all the patriarchs and prophets lived, and which Christ and his apostles authorized! Such pitiful follies and wrongs as these give little promise that those hands will be the ones to heal the breaches of Protestant Christendom. At a later day we have seen a journal which called itself the *Christian Union*, circulated with

vast zeal and expense, avowedly to advocate this cause of peace and love. But its tone was the most truculent and threatening which has ever been heard in America.

The plans likewise of these men do not appear to be the result of devout faith and reliance on God, but of an arrogant worldly wisdom and unbelief. They manifestly have little faith in the power of the truth, unsupported by material power, to subdue the world to Christ. They have forgotten our Saviour's declaration that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation;" they wish to have men cry, "Lo, here; and lo, there." They are anxious to exchange strict integrity of conviction and purity of doctrine, and the secret but mighty power of the Holy Ghost through his words, for human *clat*, numbers, wealth, combination and power. They expect and prepare to convert the world as they built the Pacific railroad, and as they conquered our country, by a mighty aggregation of money and numbers. There is, my brethren, more of the lust of power than of disinterested love in these overtures for fusion.

And this suggests the last point which I propose to urge in this discussion. *Pretensions, which so plainly betray the cravings of ambition, are ominous of danger to religious liberty.* The employment of force to produce conformity has always been the natural corollary of the principle these men assert. Consider: They say that the visible oneness of church government is necessary to realize a Christian unity. Outward conformity, then, becomes an imperative Christian duty. He who refuses it rends the body of Christ. All separation is schism, according to them, and the tendency of their premises is, of course, towards the extreme conclusion that schism is a sin that necessarily damns the soul. Now, the dangerous trait of this creed is that it obviously sets the sin of division, as they term it, in such a light that its forcible prevention and punishment becomes reasonable. For the practical argument against the persecution of errorists, supposing them really in error, was not that men are irresponsible for the false opinions they sincerely entertain; they are responsible to God. Nor was it that the crime of heterodox belief is not mischievous; it may be infinitely mischievous. Why, then, supposing the crime of false belief clearly ascertained, why may it not be as reasonably suppressed by force as horse-stealing or murder? The answer which Protestantism gives is this: That the man

of evil belief is responsible, but to God only, and not to man, because God is the exclusive Lord of the conscience, and that a belief which is not intelligent and sincere is worthless to God and man, whereas the stocks, the rack, the scourge, have no tendency to reconcile the mind and heart of the sufferer to the creed of those who are persecuting him. But now see how the dogma of the necessary unity of the visible church evades all this just logic. It replies: Very true, the stocks, the rack, the scourge are not means to produce light in the understanding and love in the heart for a creed before rejected and hated, but they are very proper means to compel acts of outward uniformity. And, according to this system, *these* are as necessary to the salvation of souls as faith and sincere conviction. Again, if a visible church claims this exclusive and necessary supremacy, *jure divino*, who can fail to see how natural will appear to it the claim of authority to enforce it? Such a church assumes to be, in a certain sense, an earthly redeemer; it will no longer admit that men are responsible only to their Redeemer in heaven for their opinions.

I beseech you here, my brethren, to ponder well the lessons of your church history; they are most instructive. You will there learn that whenever the church has condescended to argue her right to persecute (many religious persecutions have been the license of mere blind hatred and fury, or of ruthless and unmasked ambition), the claim has always been argued from the false postulate that the visible church must necessarily have an external and organic unity. Was it not on this plea that the bishops of Rome crushed out the primitive churches of Britain and Ireland? But the most significant fact to my mind in the whole history of religious liberty is this: That the first assumption of the right to persecute by the Christian church itself was made against the Donatists of North Africa in the fifth century, and on the arguments of the great Augustine. These sectaries, as they were called, were charged by the Catholic Christians with no error of doctrine; they held the same creed. They had separated themselves from the rest of the church on points of church government. The division was finally suppressed by persecutions at the advice of the father I have named. He was a man by no means cruel or arrogant in temper, and few of any age have doubted his eminent piety. He was also committed

by his own published declarations, as well as by his generous feelings, *against* the employment of force in religious disputes. But at length the erroneous principles of the age as to the necessary unity of the visible church asserted their natural force over his conclusions, and he convinced himself and the rulers of his day that force was reasonable and useful. From that day to this these arguments of Augustine have been the most plausible pleas of religious tyranny, and all the more mischievous because of the deserved honor attached to his venerable name.

False principles, like leaven in the meal, always tend to work out their logical consequences, and to lead their votaries to all their results. These may be very unexpected; they may be very unpopular; they may be bitterly repudiated, even by those who are unconsciously tending towards them. But in due time they come, and are at last boldly avowed. Unless the seminal errors are purged out, this must be so; because the human mind must reason connectedly from its postulates. Persecution for opinion's sake is disavowed in theory by all, in this age and country. Whether the persecuting *temper* is not present already, the observant man can judge. But let this project of church union advance to a certain stage, and the claim will be again avowed. The ground on which the work of fusion is urged, remember, is that the true church *must be visibly one*. It will not be hard for the growing party to convince itself that it alone is the true church. It will be equally clear in its eyes that those perverse people who refuse to conform to it are very great sinners, because they obstruct the approaching glorious unification. And now, as the character of this great mass is corrupted, and its arrogance inflated by wealth, numbers and conscious power, it will not fail to persuade itself at last that as it has the might, it has the right to compel our allegiance.

For all these reasons, then, I am convinced that a general organic union is no means to promote Christian union. As I began, so I end by affirming the inestimable value of the latter. A true Christian union, which should make the parts of the visible church catholic "first pure, then peaceable," would indeed increase the moral and spiritual power of God's people for good. I do not look to the mere increase of numbers and wealth as any power whatever for the world's conversion. The true union of principle and love would make Christians holier

and happier. It would economize much effort now expended in the rivalries of Christians against each other which should be directed to aggressions against the common enemy. It would remove the dishonor sometimes done to the gospel, not by the necessary existence of denominations, but by their unnecessary contentions.

How then may this worthy object be now furthered by us? The answer will indicate my views of what is practical and practicable.

First, Where denominations of Christians exist separately in the same regions of the church, which are really agreed in principles, and are kept asunder only by unessential differences of usage, they should fuse themselves into one organization. In such case the inconveniences of separation are compensated by no gain of peace or of conscientious integrity. The testimony of the two is the same, and they may properly join in uttering it.

Second, Where the differences are such that there cannot be a peaceable and honest fusion into one, each denomination should recognize in the others a valid church character, and concede to them the same right of independent and conscientious testimony, within the pale of the visible church, which they claim for themselves.

Do you ask how far this recognition shall be extended? I answer, *to all communions which retain those features which are the marks of a visible church—the word, the ministry, and the sacraments of Christ, even to that degree which is fundamental to the great end of the church, the redemption of souls.* We all admit that, of the doctrines and instrumentalities of Christ's kingdom, some are fundamental in a sense in which others are not. Some may be unknown, or even disbelieved or disused, without destroying the soul. Others are so essential that without them salvation is impracticable. Now, we should receive those communions which honestly hold and employ the latter as valid, though imperfect parts of the visible church catholic.

Do you ask again, Who is to decide, in a particular case, which doctrines and ordinances are essential to the being of a true visible church? I reply, *each communion must, as far as its intercourse with others goes, decide this for itself.* If it decides too strictly, and refuses to recognize some whom the Scriptures recognize, this is their error. There is no human remedy.

This, their uncharitableness, though their error, does not unchurch them, and should be treated by other communions as other lesser blemishes are treated. And as long as these others refrain from retaliation, and stand prepared to reciprocate the communion of saints as soon as it can be done on equitable terms, the responsibility of the separation thus made rests exclusively with the first party. We thus see that it is not the right of conscientious differences on the lesser points, and of denominations formed thereon, which incurs the guilt of schism; but rather the refusal of that right on unscriptural and inadequate grounds.

Third, Each denomination should recognize the validity of the ministry and sacraments of every other evangelical denomination. The intercommunion of their ministers as ministers, and their members as members, should manifest this brotherhood on all suitable occasions.

Fourth, The disciplinary acts performed by one communion should be held valid by every other. All denominations having agreed on these two prime principles, that the church has no statute book binding the consciences of God's children but the Bible, and no penalties for transgressions but the moral and spiritual, a sentence passed on these principles by one denomination upon its unruly member should be respected by all others. Just as a man under censure migrating from one Presbyterian congregation to another cannot be reinstated by the second against the verdict of the first, but is required to reconcile himself to the same body which he had offended, so should it be throughout the church catholic.

Last, and chiefly, *all Christians should study moderate and charitable feelings towards others, and should sincerely seek to grow in the knowledge of revealed truth.* As they approach nearer that infallible standard they will approach nearer to each other. "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace." (James iii. 17, 18.) "Let us therefore be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. iii. 15, 16.)

BROAD CHURCHISM.¹

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."—2 TIM. i. 13.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."—TITUS i. 9.

FATHERS AND BRETHREN: It has been hitherto both the characteristic and the boast of our branch of the Reformed Church that it was a strict advocate of doctrinal correctness. Our Confession is one of the longest and most detailed, as it is the most orthodox and judicious, among the symbols of Protestantism. It has been the fixed principle of Presbyterianism in all its better days, that its teachers must subscribe its honored standards in the strict sense of the system of doctrine which they embody. The following statement of facts evinces the correctness of my assertion:

I. All the members of the original Synod, except one, adopted in 1729 every doctrine of the Confession, as expressing his own faith, save certain clauses relating to the power of civil magistrates in matters of religion. II. The Synod in 1730 declared that they required all "intrants" to receive the standards as strictly as the existing members had done the year before. III. In 1736 the same declaration was made in stronger terms. IV. When the two Synods were united in 1758, after the schism, it was on the following basis as to doctrine: "1. Both Synods having always approved and received the Westminster Confession and Larger and Shorter Catechisms as an orthodox and excellent system of Christian doctrine, founded on the word of God, we do still receive the same as the Confession of our faith, and also adhere to the plan of worship, government and discipline contained in the Westminster Directory; strictly enjoining it on all our ministers and probationers for the ministry that they preach and teach according to the form of sound words in the said Confession and Catechisms, and avoid and oppose all errors contrary thereto. 2. That no Presbytery license or ordain to the work

¹ A sermon constituting the General Assembly, which met at Huntsville, Ala., May 18, 1871.

of the ministry any candidate, until he give them competent satisfaction as to his learning and experimental acquaintance with religion and skill in divinity and cases of conscience, and declare his acceptance of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as the confession of his faith, and promise subjection to the Presbyterian form of government in the Westminster Directory." In 1788, when the present constitution was adopted, the same ground was taken.

This time-honored principle is, in these latter days, by many misunderstood, and by not a few despised. I propose, therefore, to invite this venerable Assembly of the guardians of God's church and truth to a scriptural discussion of it, founded upon the injunctions of the holy apostle to Timothy and Titus.

The introductions to the epistles (1 Tim. i. 3, 4; Titus i. 5,) inform us that the two evangelists had been already instructed in their duties. Why then did the Holy Ghost move the apostle to write these pastoral epistles, and why has the providence of God preserved them among the canon of Scripture? The obvious answer is, that they are intended to instruct not only the ministers to whom they were first sent, but all the presbyters of the church in all ages. And I shall assume, what none here will contest, the express application to us, "on whom these ends of the world have come," of every permanent precept and principle the epistles contain.

The two texts which I have presented speak substantially the same thing.

To Timothy the apostle says: "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me." It is not necessary for me to assert that this phrase indicates literally a verbal formula enjoined upon Timothy as a fixed "confession of his faith." But "the form of sound (or healthful) words" was a pattern of doctrine which Timothy had heard of Paul, and which the disciple was to preserve jealously, and transmit (2 Tim. ii. 2) to succeeding presbyters and evangelists. The succeeding verse calls it a deposit, or trust, of an excellent and responsible nature, committed to Timothy by God, to be kept by the aid of the Holy Ghost. This description clearly implies that the doctrinal code was a definite thing, marked by clear characters, and that Timothy had no discretion or license to remit or modify any part of it.

So in the parallel injunction to Titus (i. 9), the man who is appointed presbyter or bishop over a Christian church must "hold fast the faithful word as he had been taught." The most competent expositors agree in construing this to mean the word which is trustworthy, as of divine authority, being in accordance with Paul's apostolic teaching. The purpose of this orthodox fidelity sufficiently evinces its nature. That purpose is to exhort and edify Christians, and to confute gainsayers, by "sound (healthful) doctrine."

In both precepts the authorized doctrinal code is called a "word," [pattern of sound words], and notwithstanding the concession which was made above, this language does at least authorize us to infer that the system committed to the Christian ministry is to be preserved and taught by them with *exactness* in all its parts. The solemn iterations with which the holy apostle urges this duty may both assure you that we do not misrepresent its nature, and teach you the importance which he attached to it. The minister of Christ is "a steward of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." (1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.) The heterodox teacher "who consents not to wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, is proud, knowing nothing, but doting," etc. (1 Tim. vi. 3, 4.) The minister must be "a workman approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. ii. 15.) Timothy must "continue in the things which he had learned and been assured of, knowing of whom he learned them." (2 Tim. iii. 14.) Titus must "show in doctrine uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned." (Titus ii. 7, 8.)

In enforcing upon church teachers and rulers the sacred obligations of strict orthodoxy, Presbyterians fully admit that some doctrines of the Christian system are not fundamental to salvation. By this we mean that a soul who embraces the fundamental and necessary points will be saved, notwithstanding his failure, through ignorance or misconception, to embrace the former. We accordingly gladly receive into the body of Christ's church catholic, and into the communion of saints, all such persons, although they do not receive sundry truths which we are assured God has revealed. Again, in obedience to Rom. xiv. 1, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful

disputations," we uniformly receive private or lay members to the full communion of our own branch of the church who profess only the primary rudiments of the faith, and we require nothing more of them than that they confirm that profession by a life of repentance. Our Directory, Chap. IX. Sec. 1, instructs pastors to inquire only whether the life of the applicant be consistent, and if he has knowledge to discern the Lord's body. As to the flock, there is no church under heaven more catholic and liberal than ours, in receiving all, whatever their doctrinal differences from us, provided they truly receive Christ as their Redeemer. We believe, indeed, that of the shepherds who undertake to guide the flock, our divine Head exacts more perfect knowledge and agreement. But even where they fail of that doctrinal harmony with us to such an extent that we dare no longer to entrust to them a part of the flock for which God has made us responsible, we still act with respectful consideration for the uncertainties of the human reason, and draw a broad distinction between the misfortune of honest error, and the criminality of wilful transgression. (See Book of Discipline, Chap. V., Sec. 14).

But with these allowances we are compelled to conclude that our text requires of all church teachers and rulers a strict and harmonious conformity to revealed doctrine.

I. Let the farther proof of this proposition be introduced by some admissions which all are ready to make. Every honest man believes that the individual teacher in the church is absolutely bound to declare the "whole counsel of God" as he himself conscientiously understands it. He is Christ's herald; the duty of a herald is to convey precisely the message of his king without addition or diminution. He is a steward of the divine mysteries, bearing an office of trust, whose first virtue is fidelity to his charge. He can only claim to be clear of the blood of all men by claiming with the apostles (Acts xx. 27) that he "hath not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God." Now, God has set down in his word some truths which are not fundamental to salvation in the sense we have agreed on above. If he has not, how does any one come to know that there are doctrines which are true and still not fundamental? Moreover we can point to such in the New Testament, as while Paul tells us (Rom. xiv. 14) that distinctions of meats are no longer obligatory, and yet

that the believer ignorant or incredulous of this proposition may be redeemed by Christ (verse 15). Now, then, God certainly put these doctrines into his word to be preached. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Such truths, therefore, are profitable, though not fundamental. The preacher is expressly enjoined to make full proof of his ministry (2 Tim. iv. 5). So that no herald of Christ does his duty who keeps back any known divine truth. Its suppression may ruin some soul, and must mar, to some degree, the sanctification of all whom he guides.

All Protestants admit the sacred right of private judgment, and most of all must the latitudinarians do so, since their peculiarity is to urge it into an excess. Then the meaning of the Scriptures is to each man the Scripture, and this meaning each must deduce for himself. In other words, each man's honest judgment must be his own standard in interpreting what the word contains. There is no infallible umpire, as in the apostle's day, between competing interpretations. The reason, even in renewed men, can be only an imperfect agent, so that good men will sincerely differ to a partial extent. The only honest preaching, then, is that in which each man delivers all that which he believes, when, judging in the fear of God, he intended to deliver in his word.

These admitted truths will be found to contain two inferences, first, That there must be different denominations of Christians, amicably respecting each other's liberty of doctrine not fundamental, within the visible church catholic. Second, That each denomination is bound to bear a full witness for God according to its agreed understanding of God's message.

But here we are met by a rival conclusion, adopted by those who style themselves "advocates of comprehension," and sometimes by a less truthful euphemism, advocates of liberal subscription in doctrinal beliefs. They claim that the doctrinal standards of the church shall be so lowered as to embrace in one denomination all whom we recognize as within the church catholic, and as holding the truths fundamental to salvation. Let the advocates of strict doctrine say they preach all their higher creed if their consciences impel them, and let the moderate have equal liberty to propagate their lower system, all in the same

communion. If the more strict are the more correct, the truth has thus, they claim, as full opportunity to assert itself, and to discredit the looser and erroneous code, as it can have, unless men are ready to recur to violence and persecution. By this method charity would, according to them, be much promoted, the scandals and weakness of the divisions of the sects removed, and the unity of Protestant Christianity displayed. In support of such comprehension they attempt also to array Scripture against us. They remind us that when the apostle enjoined ministers, under the penalty of exclusion, to consent "to the doctrine which is according to godliness," or to "hold fast the form of sound words," it was even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the "pattern received from him." But they urge, the strained hyper-orthodoxy of the sects can claim no "thus saith the Lord" for its peculiarities. To the fair mind the reply to this shallow plausibility is clear. We think we have a "thus saith the Lord." We are as honestly convinced that every point of our orthodoxy is received from Christ and his apostles, as they are concerning their different creeds, which are always found, by the way, to include at least as many points of detail, and which they assert at least as tenaciously as orthodoxy does its peculiar features. But our conscientious conviction of what our Lord hath delivered unto us must be our imperative rule, in the absence of an infallible umpire between us and them. And when they seek to enforce their different convictions upon us, who have as much right to judge for ourselves as they for themselves, what is this but elevating their latitudinarianism into the starkest spiritual despotism?

These advocates of comprehension also recite very confidently all the precepts of the epistles where Christians are exhorted "to mind the same things," to have no "divisions among them," not to be called by the names of men, and to avoid strife and schisms. The express command of the apostle (Titus iii. 10) "to reject the man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition," is transmuted by a species of exegetical jugglery to an opposite meaning, namely, that every friend of orthodoxy who seeks to "reject" a heretic shall be himself rejected as a heretic for doing so. The only refutation which this needs is the obvious remark that it contradicts itself; the proposition commits a logical "*felo de se*." Grant that the "heretical man"

of the text is a "sect-maker," rather than a speculative errorist, it is impossible to exclude the fact that it is always the doctrinal error which generates the sect, whence the criminality arises out of the false doctrine as its source.

The issue being thus developed between the scriptural and the latitudinarian theory of church obligations to the truth, I proceed, in the second place, to reinforce our views,

II. From the fact that a visible church, in its organic capacity, is as truly a witnessing body as an individual herald of the gospel. "For he established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children." (Ps. lxxviii. 56.)

"This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed." (Is. lix. 21.) "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. xxviii. 19-20.) "The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15.) "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus." (Rev. xii. 17.) And hear, above all, that dying testimony which the divine Head of the church sealed with his martyrdom: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John xviii. 37.) If these declarations of the Word need any confirmation, it is found in a very short deduction. The end of the church's corporate existence is unquestionably "the gathering and perfecting of God's elect." But the instrument of this work is chiefly gospel truth.

Now, we saw a few moments ago that the individual minister is indisputably bound to declare the whole counsel of God, according to his honest conviction. His commission is from Christ, but it is through the church. Moreover, the church's organ, through which she officially performs her witnessing function as a body, is her ministry. Their official testimony is her

testimony. Is not the church ordained by her Head to have an organic life and action? Surely; and the practical object is as obvious: that the truth may receive all the additional force of associated or combined support. By this divine law all Christians, who would otherwise contend only with the disjointed strength of separated integers, are trained to the might of a disciplined army, multiplying manifold their natural forces.

The church, then, must bear an official witness, which is the act of the body, and not merely of the individual agents. Hence it must follow that the body, and also each ruling part thereof, is responsible to God for the tolerated official acts of each member. If I, then, a ruler in this body, lend to an officer or member of it any portion of my official weight or countenance to aid him in proclaiming religious error, contradicting in any point more or less essential that code of redeeming truth which Christ has committed to us, I am, to that extent, recreant to my obligations—unfaithful to my Master. I am prostituting power with which he has clothed me for the edification and guardianship of his redeemed sheep.

Nor can the force of this conclusion be evaded by saying that, on the theory of comprehension, the public distinctly understands that each minister in the church is alone responsible for the details of his own doctrinal system. Practically it is not so; it cannot be so. I ask, with emphasis, when a minister of the most latitudinarian communion in the land stands up in her pulpits as her ordained minister, does the public receive his declarations as worth absolutely no more than his individual word? Is he practically no more her representative to them than the unordained lay-preacher, who has no church ties whatever? Obviously he is more. The public hears his church in him. Were he not, his office, character, work, and ordination thereto would be an absolute nullity, and the very end of a church organization vanished!

Thus is suggested to us a fatal objection to this so-called theory of comprehension: that the church as a body will bear no distinctive testimony for Christ, co-extensive with his commission to her. As a body, she arrests her testimony at those fundamental truths which all must adopt in order to hold the Christian name in the judgment of charity. Whenever any such weak brother in the faith takes exception against any of the

other doctrines, all of which are profitable for instruction in righteousness, she forthwith drops that from her organic testimony, though she may be convinced that it is a part of Christ's teaching. Then is she, to that extent, recreant to her great end as an associated body. It may be that persons in her pale deliver a distinctive and full testimony for Christ, but it is also testimony against their own comrades, who claim an equal ecclesiastical right to deliver a testimony against them and against Christ their master. There may be much individual right testimony, but there is no complete church testimony. The tendencies of such a state are either to make the body a "house divided against itself," which "cannot stand," or to resolve it into a mob of discordant individuals, and thus to terminate its visible church character. That this conclusion is just, the latitudinarian himself virtually proves when he is constrained to repudiate the official declaration of some brother who has come to dispute some article of the short creed which has been adopted as their church covenant. The communion must disavow and exclude that dissentient from the ranks of her ministry, or he ceases to have even the short latitudinarian creed. The principle is conceded. Then if we are right in believing that Christ has given his church a fuller creed to witness, the same principle sustains us.

This demonstration is enhanced by the fact that the truths of redemption are a connected system. To say that it carries evidence to the human reason is to admit that its several propositions must have a logical dependence; for if the reason of man has any methodical law, a corresponding method must appear in that set of affirmations which are to commend themselves to the reason as truths. When, therefore, the advocates of doctrinal license say, meaning to utter a reproach, that "orthodoxy is remorselessly logical," they have in fact spoken the highest praise. That it is logical in the dependence of its propositions is one of the prime signatures of truth. The revealed system is a regular arch; the removal of the smallest stone loosens another, and that another, until the very keystone is shaken and the whole structure endangered. The surrender of a point of doctrine not fundamental to salvation endangers others more important than itself. When men once begin to drop out a part of "the testimony of Jesus," "their word will eat as doth a can-

ker." (2 Tim. ii. 17). What pastor does not know how original sin and regeneration stand or fall together, or Christ's divinity and justification? But let us consider an instance less obvious. Does God's foreknowledge of the future generate his purpose concerning it, as in some of the thoughts of his rational creatures? Or is the reverse true of the infinite supreme cause: that his eternal purpose generates his foreknowledge of the future? A question this, you will say, nice, abstruse, far remote from the practical issues of faith and redemption. Well, I believe that many an imperfect believer who has answered it wrong is now glorified through the mercy of God in Christ. But he who follows the two propositions to their strict consequences must at last admit that if it is true that God's foreknowledge always generates his purpose; then the "election of grace" is conditioned on some foreseen spiritual good in man. Then the sinner's will must be self-moved, in its first action, to quicken itself to choose God as his spiritual good. And then native depravity is not radical; and the lost sinner should be taught to look to himself, rather than to Christ, to initiate his salvation and to preserve it. Thus this very remote abstraction will become so practical as to modify every prayer which comes out of the believing sinner's mouth, if he is only sufficiently consistent in his logic.

Thus the rejection of a truth not fundamental may jeopardize those that are. Do you ask: Will not this virtually abolish the distinction, making all error, even the least, necessarily destructive, since the less leads on so logically to the greater heresy? I reply, there is always some liability to such a result, in the man who adopts any substantive error in theology; but he is not regularly subject to it, because the spirit and providence of God, who loves him if he is a true penitent, guard him against the natural consequences of his error, and maintain in him a principle of holiness whose tendencies are stronger than the logical tendencies of a defective creed. But the herald and teacher of others is expected to be thoroughly informed and to have logical consistency of mind. "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." (Matt. xiii. 52.) There are two reasons for not tolerating in them, as teachers, the error which we lament in

the private Christian whom we yet embrace as a brother. That the mind of the educated, professional man is more likely to be consistent in its error, and to push it to mischievous results; and that he who undertakes to guide others, especially where immortal souls are the irreparable stakes, is justly required to attain unto a fuller accuracy.

Let us now return; seeing each communion is sacredly bound to deliver some one consistent testimony, which one shall it be? There can be but one answer, that one which is conscientiously believed by its associated teachers; and the principle of association must be this, that those who can honestly see eye to eye shall associate into one body or branch of the visible church. Does it necessarily follow hence that there will be several denominations of Christians within the church catholic, limiting partially its external unity? We answer, so be it; it is the smaller of the unavoidable evils, unless all human minds which imbibe any Christian truth can be rendered infallible, or unless the right of private judgment be destroyed, or else unless an inspired umpire in doctrinal differences can be found on earth. The position of the pope is a very expressive avowal of this conclusion, for in attempting to exact of all Christians a formal unity he professes infallibility.

The former cannot be reasonable without the latter. The result which we have embraced is found as conducive to peace as to purity of doctrine. The Presbyterian communion, the strictest of all in exacting full orthodoxy, according to her standard, of all her ministry, is also the most truly catholic of all the Protestant churches. Her overtures to other branches of Christ's church, and, whenever they are accepted, her actual relations with them, are of the most fraternal character. But if all these denominations were aggregated, there must be either unfaithfulness to truth or strife. The debates of denominations over doctrinal differences are far less bitter than those of earnest men differing within the same pale. Witness the comparative heat of the strifes between the Old and New Schools before their separation, and of the Evangelicals and Puseyites in the Anglican Church.

So true is this that there is no communion on earth formed in this theory of comprehension that is true to it. None include all who hold the essentials of the faith. None can include all

who, on their own theory, are faithful to all the fundamental doctrines ; but they find themselves compelled to make a term of full ministerial communion of one or another of the lesser points. Suppose two bodies, one of which heartily admitted lay preaching, and the other as sincerely believed it anti-scriptural and disorganizing. How could they possibly administer a common government in the same church courts ? Pedobaptists and immersionists cannot join in the same spiritual family. Those who hold that prelatic ordination is essential to a valid ministry cannot work in the same government with us, who hold that presbyterial ordination is not only sufficient, but more scriptural. Now we, at least, are willing to admit that neither lay preaching, nor immersionism nor prelatic ordination is a fundamental error. Yet in a communion of the opposite belief they necessarily exclude their advocates. The theory of comprehension, if consistently attempted, would be found impossible.

Indeed, as though its advocates were fated to demonstrate its falsehood by the greatest possible absurdities, we find them combining a rejection of some brethren, on grounds not fundamental, in the teeth of their own theory, with the cordial embracing of other false brethren, in spite of differences which are fundamental, in the teeth again of their own theory. The "Church of the Reformers" in our land is avowedly constructed by the founder, Alex. Campbell, on the broadest plan of comprehension. It glories in having no creed. It began by declaring that the test for communion should have but one question in it, "Do you receive Jesus as Saviour?" But let the brother seek admission into its fold who purposes to practice the amiable weakness of "baby-sprinkling," and he is strictly excluded, notwithstanding every other grace of an eminent Christian. Yet this charity which is too narrow to allow this error so obviously non-essential, if an error, is yet capacious enough to embrace him who discards the whole office work of the Holy Ghost and the very calling of grace by which alone any soul ever became Christian. The time was when for long years the Anglican Church, while glorying in their wide comprehension, refused ministerial communion to their own brethren in America, like themselves prelatically ordained and retaining their own standard and ritual, because they were not ordained by Anglican prelates. But at the same time they willingly extended this ministerial

communion to Arminians, Arians and Rationalists, whom their own articles should have excluded as fundamentally erroneous. Thus did they violate their own theory of comprehension at once in both its parts. Northern Calvinism, as it styles itself, has no charity for the holiest man in our land who declines to insert the creed of a humanitarian politics into his gospel; but it has comprehension enough to receive a Pelagianism as outspoken as was ever condemned by the church of all ages in Celestine or Pope Zosimus. So did the world see that association which announces its great mission to man to be the patronizing of comprehension and fraternity, the "Evangelical Alliance," spurn from it the purest church on earth in creed and character, because it was not ready to declare criminal that relation of domestic servitude in which all the patriarchs and prophets lived, and which Christ and his apostles authorized. But they could gladly embrace the Reformed Church of France, which tolerates those who flout the central truths of redemption, the divinity and vicarious satisfaction of Christ, the fall of man, and the person and work of the Holy Ghost. Are such hands, I ask, the ones to heal the breaches of Christendom? If a true Protestant unity is ever to exist, it must be the work of a broader wisdom and equity than theirs. If we may learn from these various instances, this theory of comprehension appears to be more a composition of indifference to truth, and factious zeal for human crotchets, than the temper of Christ.

III. Thus is suggested to us a third argument: A church, whose teachers are not heartily agreed in doctrine, can only have peace within itself at the cost of a Sadducean indifference to truth. Suppose a higher and lower theology beside each other in the same communion, and the former advocated by men who entertain an honest zeal for God's truth. None but men of this stamp are of any value in propagating the truth and making an effective impression upon the kingdom of darkness. Suppose, also, that the erroneous teachers are equally zealous for their false creed. What can result, except the most unseemly strifes? A part of the testimony of one pulpit is contradicted by another; and both speak by the same ecclesiastical authority! Which shall the laity follow? Or shall this disgraceful contradiction be arrested by a compact, that both parties shall preach only the fundamentals in which both are

agreed? Such a covenant the erroneous are never willing to keep, and the orthodox dare not. For no revealed truth is valueless. Every doctrine of the Scriptures is a part of the herald's message. Any suppression is liable, though not necessarily certain, to mislead a soul. Shall I conceal it, and thus possibly get the blood of souls upon my skirts, when the sword comes and takes them without adequate warning? I dare not, and will not. Thus we should be always liable to that preposterous result which a few years ago was presented in the latitudinarian Reformed Church of Paris; in the same pulpit, and by the same authority, A. Monod might be heard, with matchless eloquence, defending that divinity of Christ which his colleagues, the next Sabbath, would assail with equal ingenuity.

Indeed, the ends designed by this so-called comprehension can only be gained by indifferentism. The theory has an obvious tendency to disparage the importance of truth. What clearer proof is needed that, when even we hear the most pious of its advocates, while asserting their own personal orthodoxy, speak of the points assailed by the opponents of the doctrines of grace as the "uncertain" points of the Christian system; while those in which errorists condescend to concur are borrowed as the "certain points"? Tried by such standards, what precious truth would not be uncertain; for which one has not, by its very holiness, provoked numerous dissentients? Such representations are mischievous, as well as unjust to the history of the church catholic. For when we examine the testimonies of its different branches in the purer ages of the reform, we find that they are unanimous in condemning the errors which this modern latitudinarianism would now fain comprehend, as not being certainly erroneous, as the church has always been in asserting the fundamental doctrines of the faith. These loose statements are not true to the glorious consensus of the true Protestant churches. Are any so ill-informed at this day of the church's history, as not to know that indifference prompts negative preaching, and that this, sooner or later, ripens into positive error? A darker phase of this loose temper appears, when we see men eager to subscribe a creed which they do not believe, and to explain away their unbelief and opposite convictions, as not adverse or new doctrines, but merely new methods of adjusting the philosophic relations of the old dogmas. What have we

not seen cloaked under this glossing pretext! Too often have men been known, under it, to sign an undoubted Calvinistic creed, while advancing, "as explanation of it," a false philosophy, which every intelligent Pelagian and even Socinian hailed as his own, and which every candid student of history recognized as the traditionary and utter opposite of Calvinism.

So benumbing is the spirit of indifferency begotten by this comprehension, that its tendency is to extinguish all true life in the church which practices it. Nothing except a prevalent secular motive has usually been able to restrain this tendency; and that motive has usually been presented in the form of a state establishment, or a common political project. An established and endowed church has indeed been seen to survive this spirit of moderatism more than once, and to survive it long. In those cases the power of honest conviction and attachment, knitting kindred minds around a common centre of precious truth, has been so far substituted by the carnal desire for the "loaves and fishes" of preferment, as to keep a heterogeneous body peaceable and numerous. But where this cohesive power of money and place is lacking, the only permanent bond of union, the only effective energizer of concerted action, is a sincere community of convictions. Experience presents us two results from this policy of comprehension, where it has been attempted by unendowed churches: either peace is banished by intestine struggles, which, operating like a harsh medicine, remove the danger of spiritual torpor by separating the discordant elements; or else peace is preserved at the expense of life, and the motley body dies in the stupor of its own indifference. The latter seems to have been the issue of the alliance of 1691, between the Presbyterians of England and a part of the Independents. In that "plan of union," it was covenanted that the diversities in the testimonies of the two should be suppressed for the sake of outward unity. The bargain was kept; and the result was, that, despite the presence of a Watts and a Doddridge, English Presbyterianism was at the end of the eighteenth century virtually dead, asphyxiated by this dishonest peace, into Socinianism.

IV. But the advocates of comprehension plead that if the laxer theologians in this mixed communion do preach negative truth or partial error, the more orthodox have equal liberty to

preach the whole truth. Thus, say they, The remedy may go along with the contagion, if contagion it be, as fully as any other system. I reply, Not so; the application of this remedy is fatally obstructed by the complication of dissimilar elements. And this is my final plea against the system: that the effectual defence of orthodoxy is excluded by it. There is, first, a homely maxim which substantiates this objection, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It is much easier to keep out error than to conquer it after it is in. How imprudent is this plan of campaign, which brings the enemy into your own camp and arms him from the resources of your own power before you begin to contend against him! Again, the friends of truth have found, to their cost, that as one cannot fight his adversary until he gets him at arm's length, so an effective testimony against error can never be borne until the struggling elements separate themselves. Either the internal strife against error tends directly to that separation, or it is futile. Witness the abortive struggles of the evangelicals in the Anglican church. They have had on their side numbers, learning, zeal, orthodoxy, honesty of purpose. But they were resolved, at the outset, that the glorious comprehension and unity of the church should in no case be sunk for the interests of doctrinal truth. Consequently their very anxious testimony has mainly gone for nothing. Their adversaries advance steadily Romeward, regarding their protests only as impertinence, carrying, it is to be feared, the body of churchmen with them. So in Scotland, the only men who did anything to rebuke "moderatism" and "patronage" were the Gillespies, Erskine, and Chalmers, who did it by seceding. The reasons of this are plain. In such a communion the orthodox Protestant is borne down by a practical consciousness that he cannot assail his own brethren and equals. They would raise against him the cry that he is disturbing the peace of the church. The temptation is thus powerful to suppress all reference to disputed dogmas and usages, and the testimony of the whole body becomes merely negative. Again, according to the constitution of such a church, the laxer creed is as fully authorized by her as the better. The testimony which denies the distinctive points of orthodoxy is the church's testimony also. The world, which holds a Pelagian creed by natural inheritance, finds, of course, the lower testimony more acceptable than the

stricter. As no fortress is stronger than its weakest bastion, so the doctrinal weight of a denomination never goes for more with the outside world than that of the lowest doctrine which that communion teaches. A church may have a decided Calvinistic creed and many Calvinistic ministers ; but I appeal to the sense of every intelligent hearer, if she tolerates Arminianism, does she ever, as a body, make a Calvinistic impression upon Christendom ?

We conclude, then, that if we would be faithful to our charge and our Master, we must, like the apostle, require all our ministers "to hold fast the faithful word as they have been taught, that they may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince gainsayers." Should it be that our little Zion will remain the last advocate of faithful subscription and a strict adherence to doctrinal purity in this land, and possibly in the Protestant world, then how solemn yet illustrious is the mission to which Christ calls us ! In strict fidelity to that mission will be our very existence as a church. Forfeit that, and the world will judge, may we not say that Christ himself will conclude, that the ground of our useful existence as a denomination is gone.

But let us not forget that this testimony for the "form of sound words which we have heard of" the apostles must be borne "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." Unhallowed is that zeal for the truth which is animated merely by rivalry, or the spirit of party, which is not founded in solemn conviction, the result of faithful study and earnest prayer, which contends for wrath, and not for conscience's sake. The apostle here teaches us, in two words, what is that spirit of orthodoxy which God requires. It values revealed truth because it has humbly received it with adoring reverence, as the gift and trust of infinite wisdom and love, and because it sees in those doctrines the instruments of glory to God and endless blessing to blind, erring man ; yea, to our enemies and opposers. Let us, then, while we hold fast to the pattern of sound words, ever study to do it in faith and love.

FRATERNAL CORRESPONDENCE.¹

CERTAIN Northern Presbyterian prints are still bent upon persuading us to consort with their church, by arguing that we are involved as deeply as themselves in the sin of political usurpations. Their argument seems to be, that we should come together, because we are alike bad! To this "soft impeachment" we beg leave to demur. But the continuance of this pertinacious effort evinces the importance of reminding our people of the real issue of principle between ours and the Northern Presbyterian Church. It is often misconceived. The true nature of the usurpation committed by that Assembly was this: The Federal administration at Washington had created a political issue against the Southern States, which, in the dispensation of an offended providence, became irreconcilable. With this issue the Southern Presbyterian Church, as a church, had nothing to do, save anxiously to deprecate it; and individuals of our church, even when engaged in the civil service of their fellow-citizens, usually did the same, standing, as the South did, upon the defensive, and earnestly desirous to escape aggression. But the providential result, precipitated chiefly by the ruthless refusal of the triumphant faction to listen to any terms except abject submission, was, that a personal question between two competing allegiances, that between the claim of the Federal government—the creature of the States—and the claim of the original States themselves, was forced on individual Southern Christians. We had no option about meeting the question. But when this imperative claim was forced on us, nearly all honest Christians here decided that the right of their States to their allegiance was the prior and superior one. That their decision was at least not consciously wicked may be argued from the historical facts, that Virginia, the oldest of the Southern States, and their leader, had expressly reserved this right in 1788, in the sovereign act in which she acceded to the Federal

¹ Appeared in the *Southern Presbyterian*, May, 1876.

compact, and had been cheerfully hailed as a member on these express terms ; that Mr. Jefferson, the founder of the Republican party, and Mr. Madison, "the father of the constitution," both expressly taught it ; that this superior claim of the States as against the Federal government to the allegiance of their own citizens was also admitted by the Adams party, the opponents of the old Republican party, by the mouth of their elected exponent, Gen. Harry Lee (Light-Horse), the father of Gen. R. E. Lee ; that it was expressly claimed by the ablest of the New England statesmen in 1814 ; that it was the avowed doctrine of both the political parties, and of nearly all the States, in the interval between 1815 and 1860 ; that it was expressly taught by Mr. Wirt, the legal member of Gen. Jackson's cabinet, even in the midst of the heated opposition of that administration to Mr. Calhoun ; that it had been roundly asserted by Chief Justice Chase, while governor of Ohio ; and especially, that it was enounced almost unanimously as the right doctrine by all that was virtuous, learned, patriotic and prudent, in the Southern bench and bar.

Well ; in April, 1861, by the dispensation of divine providence, and by no act of my own, this inexorable issue was forced on me for my personal decision. Mr. Lincoln claimed my allegiance and aid against my own State. Virginia declared him a usurper, and claimed my allegiance and aid against him. I had to decide between them, as conscientiously as I might. This was evidently a case for the exercise of the right of private judgment, so far as ecclesiastical control was concerned. The question did not turn on any spiritual principle of duty to Christ, but on historical and political facts. The question was not at all one between lawlessness and subordination, between rebellion or obedience to "the powers that might be." No Southern Christian dreamed of electing lawlessness and insubordination to constituted human authority. The sole question was between two rival authorities, which had come in a very peculiar and complicated form of government into competition : the older and prior sovereign-State authority, and the newer and derived Federal authority. This was precisely the point : Which must I, a Virginian, obey ? I decided as the fathers of the Federal constitution, as New England, as Chief Justice Chase, had decided : I obeyed my State.

Well; in May, 1861, the Presbyterian General Assembly in Philadelphia took upon itself to decide that this my Christian act, so anxiously, prayerfully, and piously performed, was *the sin of rebellion*, prohibited by the apostle in Romans xiii. and 1 Peter ii. They did this, though warned expressly that, in order to reach such a conclusion logically, the Assembly was bound to entertain ecclesiastically, to examine and adjudicate, this prior historical and political question—if it dared to say it had a right to do so. For obviously, the whole decision turned upon it. But the Assembly tyrannically refused to have this vital question argued; refused to hear evidence upon it; cut off every word of defence; and the well-known penalty upon any Southern member for exercising his sacred constitutional right in this behalf would have been to be torn in pieces by a frantic mob of those Philadelphians, who are now busy going through the sham of celebrating the centennial anniversary of the principles which they hate and have trampled down in mire and blood. Here was a usurpation, equalling in bald and ruthless spiritual tyranny, and in mischievous perversion of moral order, righteousness, and liberty, anything ever done by the Popes Gregory VII. or Innocent III.

Of course, all of that Assembly, except the *ignoramuses*, knew better. They knew that, ecclesiastically and spiritually, they had nothing to do with the question, unless they had had the righteousness and moral courage, in the exercise of their pastoral function, to speak up for the rights of conscience, and advise moderation and conciliation to their own aggressive people. Even Dr. Hodge instructed them, timidly, of their usurpation. But they would not hearken. What was their motive? It was to grasp that influence which, they supposed, the edicts of a powerful spiritual court so long venerated would exert over the consciences of Presbyterians, to aid and strengthen the greedy political faction to which these usurping ecclesiastics happened to be attached by their passions and supposed interests. Such was the real nature of the war legislation from 1861 to 1866.

Now, the Southern church, in fidelity to Christ, had no option but to resist. And as the radical Assemblies had perpetrated the wrong by invading the sphere of political rights, our church could meet and resist the usurpation only by following

them, for defensive purposes, into the same sphere. This is very simple. But hence has arisen a miserable quibble, which seems to have deluded the whole North, and to have embarrassed not a little many Southern minds. It has been argued that, if the radical Assemblies went out of their sphere in pronouncing the decision of Southern patriots to be the sin of rebellion, the Southern Assembly has gone equally out of its sphere, in pronouncing that it was not the sin of rebellion. "You," say they, "are as deep in the mire as we are in the mud." To a fair mind the answer is very clear. The one intruded into the secular sphere *for the purpose of invading* a right of private judgment, which is one of the rights all churches are bound to protect. The other only followed them, as far as their invasion necessitated, *for the purpose of defending* this sacred right. In fact, this clear distinction was faithfully observed by the Southern church. Never once did her Assembly say to any one: You shall go with the Southern patriots into the support of the Confederacy, or be adjudged guilty of the sin of rebellion. This would have been the exact, formal counterpart of the usurpation of the Northern Assembly. But the Southern Assemblies steadily held that the decision of this political question was a right of each Christian's private judgment; involving, of course, the inference, that he who decided for his own State could not be charged with ecclesiastical offence, where the same immunity was guaranteed to him who decided against his own State. This distinction has received a thousand illustrations. But there happens to be one so just that we cannot do better than present it. In the Old School Assembly of 1859, some enthusiasts memorialized the body to adopt the precept that the temperate use of anything alcoholic is sin *per se*, and to make total abstinence therefore a term of communion. The Assembly wisely, and almost unanimously, refused to do it. But in order to ground this refusal logically, the Assembly was obliged to hold and teach, that the temperate drinking of any alcoholic liquid is *not sin per se*. Of course. Now, did the Assembly mean, that it was one of her legitimate spiritual functions to *countenance temperate drinking*? Not at all. Let us suppose that some fanatic had said: "This decision carries an incidental encouragement to temperate drinking, in its implied sanction; it will be gleefully quoted by distillers and

whisky-sellers. This Assembly has therefore, to say the least, gone out of her sphere on one side, as far as the Delavan-Christian has gone on the other. If he is wrong, she is wrong." This nonsense would have embarrassed nobody; the answer would have been plain: that the Assembly was legislating aright, not in the positive interests of temperate drinking; but in the interests of Christian liberty, which it was her proper spiritual function to define and protect. The aggression attempted by the Delavan fanatic had made it necessary for the Assembly to follow him into the social question, for defensive purposes.

But your radical is a pertinacious animal; and this wretched sophism, thoroughly stuck to, and continually repeated to this day (see *Presbyterian and Princeton Quarterly*, April, 1876), seems to have confused some men's minds among us, until they are almost afraid to stand to the truth. For myself, as an ecclesiastical ruler, I clearly saw my duties to Christ and the spiritual rights of his people; and as a private citizen, I was not ashamed of that secular cause which was made glorious by the most intelligent, disinterested and heroic devotion to principle and liberty ever displayed by any people, and by such blood as that of Sidney Johnson, Jackson, and Polk. This clear distinction between the aggressive attitude of the Northern, and the defensive attitude of the Southern church, also justifies me in my references to the history of the political question, in what I design for an ecclesiastical discussion.

But again: as the Confederate struggle went on, slavery happening to be the incidental occasion (*not the cause.*) of the collision, the same usurpers in the Radical Assemblies bethought themselves of the expedient to strengthen their political faction still more, and to inflame the horrors of war against their "Southern brethren," by declaring slavery a *sin per se*, and the justifying of the relation of master and bondsman a "heresy" and a "blasphemy." True, they thus contradicted at once the word of God, the law of their own church as settled for all parts of it by their own Assembly of 1845, and the constitution whose integrity alone could give the North any pretext of right to rule or judge in the South. But these were no obstacles, when they saw this opportunity to heat up the declining fires of hatred and warfare. To these two usurpations, and to this heresy, and to this libel against our fathers and us, they still adhere in this

year of grace, 1876, while busily pretending to celebrate the centennial of those acts of the fathers embodying precisely the principles of State sovereignty, secession and liberty, which these men fiercely destroyed in 1865. These are the grounds not for our malice and revenge, but for our conscientious testimony and resistance. As to the civil government which has for eleven years, under the solemn and chastening ordinance of God, been permitted to establish its usurped authority irresistibly over my State, I submit peaceably, as to the "ordinance of God," just as Paul and Peter and Christ commanded private Christians to submit, in all things not unlawful, to conquering pagan Rome. I know what the chastising will of God is, in this particular, and bow to it. But as to the rights of conscience of my brethren and my childrer, I have no option to concede anything, any more than Peter and John had to concede when commanded "not to preach in the name of Jesus." The principles of Christ's kingdom are sacred and unchangeable—they are not antiquated with the lapse of eleven, or eleven hundred years.

But there seems to be an impression, that the true meaning of this issue has somehow passed away for us; that the overthrow of the constitution and the revolution in the government are complete and irrevocable; that these usurpations by the Radical Assemblies upon our rights of conscience, provoked by the dead Confederacy and dead slavery are wholly things of the past; and that therefore it is time for us to drop our testimony, and "let by-gones be by-gones." The answer to this feeble talk is that, unfortunately, the aggressors will not let by-gones be by-gones. What has happened since 1866, and what is now happening? We saw how the usurping ecclesiastics greatly inflamed and aggravated the horrors of war, hounding on the fiercest spirits of the invaders. They have steadily supported and encouraged the acts of oppression which are now filling many parts of the South with misery and destitution, and crushing several States under their own slaves. They are to-day wielding their whole influence in support of a system which destroys the liberties of the South, and which will probably destroy American institutions both North and South. I see these ecclesiastics, after eleven years, still glorying in all these iniquities, revelling in the spoils of the invasion, just as they did in

the hour of the first spoliation, and to this hour refusing to retract a single libel upon our sainted fathers and ourselves, whom they pronounced heretics, sinners, and blasphemers, for daring to defend the relation in which the "Father of the faithful" lived and died. It is by their sanction and eager advocacy that our widows and orphans, who in many cases were incapable of exercising even an active sympathy as non-combatants with what these men are pleased to call "rebellion," have been subjected, *and are to-day subjected*, eleven years after the end of the war, to spoliations and oppressions of *murderous cruelty*. I speak deliberately: these helpless victims, absolutely innocent even from the conquerors' point of view, have literally perished, and are now perishing under these cruelties. In all this I fail to see any ground for silencing our righteous protest. But especially is this false cry of peace preposterous in view of the distinct and clear declaration of the Radical Assembly at this time, that they do not mean to retract the usurpations of 1861-66. They expressly retain the claims. Doubtless this is done for a purpose intensely practical; and if there is to be any healthy struggle in American politics, not for State sovereignty, but for a return to sounder and better usages in the newly formed, consolidated empire, it will be found that these popish claims are reserved *for the purpose of being used* in the service of a political faction. Let us suppose a case, that may very naturally arise. Every honest and intelligent person, North and South, believes that universal negro-suffrage was a deplorable blunder, and is an experiment fraught at this time with peril to the whole country. Nine out of ten of the freedmen are wholly unqualified for the trust. Experience has given us a complete demonstration, that they abuse it to the advancement of men utterly unfit for public trust, selfish, unpatriotic, and designing. Who doubts it? Thoughtful men everywhere were greatly misdoubting whether universal white suffrage had not already extended the privilege of voting into too many incompetent hands: and the integrity of American politics was staggering under that load. But now the addition of hundreds of thousands of barbarous, alien, ignorant voters, where the case was already hazardous, makes the experiment fearful. Such is the state of this matter. Now let us suppose that many secular leaders at the North, far less rabid than these ecclesiastical factionists, should concur with many public men at the South, who, notwithstanding their enormous

wrongs, truly seek the best possible future for the whole of the consolidated empire, in inquiring after a remedy for this fearful peril. The only practical or practicable remedy would be what is known as "impartial suffrage." Nothing in the terms imposed by the conquerors of the South, or in the last so called "amendments" to the constitution, forbids our thinking of this. "Impartial suffrage" would make no difference between the negro and his former master, on the score of "race, color, or previous condition of bondage." Whatever were the qualifications enacted, it would exclude the unqualified white as much as the unqualified black. But let us suppose that when this remedy was proposed, it should suit the views and plans of your Mortons, Colfaxes and Blaines, to raise the howl, that the ascendancy of the Radical party was imperilled by "impartial suffrage," and to raise the cry: "Parsons, to the rescue!" Is it not everyway likely that the Radical Presbyterian Assembly would again draw the sword of this popish usurpation, which they are preserving so carefully for future use? We should probably have them at their next meeting telling all the good people, by authority of the divine Head of the church, that "manhood suffrage" was involved in the Christian creed, and that this "rebel" invention of "impartial suffrage" was clear "sin, heresy, and blasphemy." It is not the least uncharitable to surmise this. For did they not deal just thus with the equally secular questions of Abolition, Free-soil, and State-rights, in past years? And has not a Radical Assembly, sitting in the name of Christ and speaking by his authority, already decided that righteousness demands the universal extension of suffrage to the freedmen? "That which hath been is that which shall be." Indeed, in the view of sagacious men, this Radical Presbyterian Church, with the Northern Methodist Church, are the two most serious and dangerous obstacles to the ascertainment of some safe and tolerably equitable basis for the government of the new empire; and if the formidable mischiefs which are now threatening the freedom and civilization of both sections alike remain unremedied, and finally work out their catastrophe, these two perverted religious bodies will be more guilty for it than any avowedly secular party in the country. It thus appears that, both in the spiritual and the civil aspect, their usurpation is a "living issue," as real as it is dangerous.

FRATERNAL RELATIONS.¹

IF we are able to understand and appreciate the feeling to-day prevalent in our church, it is similar to our own, that the last Assembly has unintentionally managed to leave our relations with the "Omnibus" Presbyterian Church in a greater muddle than ever. Having watched this matter intelligently and earnestly from its inception, at our Louisville Assembly, in 1870, until now, we cannot but feel that our management of it has been blundering. It is not charged that any action of our side has been dishonest, unrighteous, or aggressive. The truth would sustain us in all of them. But they have often been inexpedient, and the result has been that we have continually been over-reached, or have over-reached ourselves. Consequently our interests in this matter have now drifted into an exceedingly untoward condition.

HISTORICAL REVIEW.

A brief historical review of the diplomacy concerning "Fraternal Relations," "so-called," will be useful. We would refer to the statement of the original usurpations, which compelled us into an attitude of ecclesiastical independence, published by Dr. Dabney in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, in May last. He has presented the case, as it lies before us, justly. Our first grievance, then, was this: that when a providential current of secular events had imposed on Southern Presbyterians the necessity of deciding, in the exercise of their own Christian liberty, a secular, legal, and political question, viz.: whether the Federal or State government had the prior claim to their civil allegiance; the Philadelphia Assembly, in 1861, did assume to decide that our deciding for the State was the "sin of rebellion" forbidden in the sacred Scriptures, and that thus the constitution of the church was outraged and a usurpation, prompted by

¹The above appeared in the *Southwestern Presbyterian*, as a series of articles, January 4th to February 15th, 1877.

faction, worldly motives, attempted over the consciences of God's people, of an essentially popish nature. And the cruel and monstrous tyranny was illustrated by this fact: that while the right of the Assembly to pass any such act depended solely upon its right and ability to entertain and decide the historical question, "Which was the prior allegiance, the State, or the Federal?" that Assembly did refuse to permit that foundation question to be entertained; and Southern members were estopped of their just right to have it entertained by the threatened penalty of being murdered by a Philadelphia mob! The usurpation was further illustrated by the temper and acts of subsequent Assemblies, New and Old School, annually repeating this tyrannical assumption over free consciences; first inventing and urging upon the civil authorities the theory not before assumed by political partisans, that "secession is treason," and thirstily clamoring for the blood of Southern patriots as "traitors." By their hounding on of the already frantic coercion party of the North to a more atrocious war, by their inciting the civil magistrate to that usurpation, the robbing us of the labor of and property in our servants, which had been declared by Mr. Lincoln, and the solemn joint resolution of his own Congress, to be beyond the constitutional power of the Federal government, either in peace or war. Such, we sorrowfully repeat, were the acts, not of Presbyterian persons only, infected with the popular madness, but of formal Assemblies, sitting as spiritual courts of the Prince of Peace, yet perverting his kingdom to ends unhalloved in temper and utterly unconstitutional in character. Then followed the famous acts of 1865-'6, declaring the doctrine of the Bible as established by their own predecessors in 1845, concerning the lawfulness of slaveholding, to be *heresy*, and denouncing us as "traitors," "rebels," "miserable sinners," and "blasphemers;" excommunicating us from the pale of the visible church catholic (for such was the obvious effect of their resolves discarding our denominational rights and existence, and providing, as the only mode, for our entering Christ's church by repentance and confession, like other profane persons), and punishing their equals, the signers of the Declaration and Testimony, for exercising their constitutional right of dissent and remonstrance. This review is absolutely necessary for the understanding of the remarks which are to follow.

Against these monstrous proceedings, Southern Presbyterians defended themselves in the only righteous way left them, by withdrawing and assuming their ecclesiastical independence. This they did with the utmost dignity and Christian forbearance. The Assemblies abstained from all denunciation and retaliation, and scrupulously allowed and respected all the church-rights of, and all the obligations of charity towards, their violent assailants and detractors.

THE LOUISVILLE ASSEMBLY.

Well, after the lapse of a few years, the Northern Assembly, moved by policy, and undeceived by the quiet firmness of the Southern people, retracted so much of their own action as had sought to exclude us from the pale of the catholic church, and made a grudging recognition of our denominational existence and church-rights. But they still practiced and encouraged all the annoyances they could, by grasping our church-property, dividing our congregations and egging on the minorities therein, usually contemptibly small, to seek to govern the majorities. It must also be remembered that the Assembly itself has since formally committed itself to the partisan, illegal and unconstitutional decision of a faction in the Supreme Court, designed to provide for the unlimited plunder of the weaker party.

But still, all the factions in the *omnibus* church eagerly craved to absorb or reconcile the Southern church. They all desired to *silence our testimony* against their usurpations. As the temper of the American people remained, after all the stimulants applied by clerical zealots, adverse to persecution and violent suppression, the only way to effect that end left them was to absorb us. The strict Old School men desired to gain the support of the Southern churches, known to be soundly orthodox, to their side in the coming doctrinal strife. The "progressives" longed to carry out their ambitious, carnal passion for an *e-pluribus-unum* church, "national" in its material grandeur, and yielding to them, the conscious majority, all its revenues of power, wealth and distinction, from all parts of the continent. This party, conscious of their irresistible ascendancy in the *omnibus* body, and of the timidity and real helplessness of the Old School party, and confident of their own ability to neutralize and silence our Old Schoolism, as they had

so thoroughly done that of the Northern orthodox, were not the least reluctant to see the latter receive the apparent accession of Southern Presbyterians known to be Old School. Then, there was a multitude of pious people carried away by the sentimental and *goodish* cry for "union of Christians." And last, there were doubtless some people who cherished an honest respect for us, and an honest desire to do us justice, and to have a more intimate Christian communion with us. This last class we gladly recognize; for we rejoice to believe that true piety is not extinct in those bodies, so unfortunately dominated by clerical radicals.

In 1870, the *omnibus* Assembly sent to our Assembly in Louisville an able and dignified committee, requesting that we should appoint a number of commissioners, to meet similar ones on their part, for the adjustment of grievances, in order to the resumption of seemly relations, not discreditable to Christian charity and the honor of Christ. The writer was a member of that Assembly, and thoroughly conversant with its feelings. The almost universal sentiment prevalent in our Assembly, as in our church, was this: that Southern Presbyterians did not desire amalgamation, or mixture with this *omnibus* church. There was an ocean of blood between them; and they and their country was (and is) still writhing and bleeding under wrongs of ingenious and exquisite cruelty, which were (and are) ardently abetted by the most of Northern Presbyterians. They had repudiated the noble doctrinal testimonies of 1837-'38; allowed themselves to be absorbed by the New School; to be abolitionized; to be made a "Broad-church." Their doctrinal and ecclesiastical tendencies were manifestly unsafe. Thus we felt that all entangling alliances with them would be as unwise and perilous as distasteful; and that, as we were entitled to protect our own self-respect and comfort, so we were solemnly bound to God to protect his truth, by maintaining our separation. But, then, it was felt that this move from the *omnibus* Assembly was most adroitly planned to put us seemingly in the wrong. They, although the real and only aggressors, designed still to appropriate the credit of taking the initiative step towards peace! They would have the *eclat* of tendering the olive branch! They fully "calculated" (to use the Yankee provincialism) that our feelings and principles would both compel us to decline it. And

then they could turn to the Christian world, and say, "See, now, these unchristian rebels, how they spurn even the olive branch!" We surmised correctly, that the ignorance and contempt of a prejudiced world, always misjudging Southern principles, would be sure to concur. The embarrassment imposed by this adroit measure was acutely felt by our Assembly. They saw the snare; they did not see very clearly how to escape it, and yet escape the designed *odium*.

At the first blush, many in the Assembly inclined to yield, though reluctantly, and appoint the commissioners requested. Another party, led by the manly and vigorous spirit of Dr. Palmer, inclined to refuse, and to re-assert the grounds of our independence boldly; that is, to "save our meat," and let the manners take care of themselves. As chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, he drew up his own views in writing, at the request of his committee, as a suggestion for their consideration. In this noble paper he roundly re-stated the grievances of Christ's cause, and told the *omnibus* Assembly that *there* was our ground for declining more intimate correspondence with them, until they undid their misdoings. But it was impossible to carry either his committee or the timid Assembly with him. The result was an awkward compromise, in which our Assembly agreed to send commissioners, and yet appended Dr. Palmer's statement of grievances, as published instructions to them what to demand of the other side. This compromise, like so many others, forfeited all the advantages, and incurred all the disadvantages. The *omnibus* Assembly had just what the "wire pullers" plotted for—a pretext to say, "Lo! these rebels spurn the olive branch." They cried out that we, while pretending a willingness to treat, had flung a new indictment in their faces—a calculated insult. So that our answer, while really sustained by truth and righteousness, pleased neither our own people nor our enemies. This was the beginning of our regular series of blunders, repeated ever since.

ANOTHER PLAN.

There was not wanting, in the Louisville Assembly, a clearer perception of the way "to save both our manners and our meat." The advocates of that way proposed it in conference, and even formulated it in writing; but, being insignificant in influence,

gained no effective hearing. Their plan would have expressed itself substantially thus, replying to the committee of the *omnibus* Assembly :

That an overture made professedly in the interests of peace, and in decent terms, should of course receive from us a consideration and reply thoroughly courteous. That, therefore, we now even allude to "grievances" only because the overture alludes to them, and only to the extent of the virtual inquiry raised by that reference of the other side. Now, therefore, whereas they invite us to send commissioners to discuss and settle those grievances, with a view to instituting closer relations, less discreditable to Christian charity than now prevail, we say that our view of those grievances is already stated, (see acts of the Southern Assembly, December, 1861, etc., etc.), as perspicuously as words of ours can state them. That we wish especially to say that we have no prosecution nor persecution to wage against their church for its past actions. That while we cannot but believe the amendment of whatever has been erroneous will do themselves much honor, we recognize in full the duties of Christian forgiveness and charity, and the wrongfulness of any *retaliatory measures* on our part. Hence we have no *demands* to make in order to the exercise of due Christian charity towards others. That the attitude we now hold, and purpose to hold, is best illustrated by the *facts* of our past, which facts are historically and literally these, viz.: that *we have all along been conceding and now concede to their churches everything which goes to make up real fraternal relations between the distinct branches* of the catholic body of Christ, without stopping to ask whether the like rights and courtesies have been equitably conceded to us, namely : Full recognition of their church-character as a part of the visible church ; of their orders and sacraments ; of their church rights, properties and endowments, in every congregation or school voluntarily adhering ; the offer of ministerial and Christian communion to their individual ministers and members among us, according to the merits of each personal case, and last, the offices of hospitality and mercy to all persons of theirs who are in need or distress in our reach. So that we now and here do for them *more, and more liberally*, than they ask through their respected committee. Whereas, they ask us to extend these fraternal relations *on condition* of certain

difficult preliminaries, we say: "*You shall have them without any preliminary as in fact you have them, and have had them, on our part, all along.*" That in view of all the above, and of the fact that attempted explanations often result in inflaming old differences, we, acting in the interests of peace as sincerely as they, deem it wholly unnecessary to send commissioners for the proposed debates, inasmuch as we have already all along granted what is proposed, so far as is consistent with our distinct independence as a denomination. For we must respectfully say, that this independent attitude, assumed under conscientious conviction, we propose to maintain from the same sacred motives. And any complimentary exchanges, other than those subsisting between us and all other branches of the true church, we shall continue to regard both as not convenient nor edifying to us, nor at all needful to the maintenance of substantial "fraternal relations." But we say in fine, that as their overture refers to the discredit done religion by our "going to law before the unbelievers," we do cheerfully agree to appoint commissioners to meet Northern commissioners, *for the express and single purpose of taking all such controversies* from those about a house or manse, up to those for a seminary-endowment, *out of court*; by referring them to impartial and Christian arbiters, binding ourselves irrevocably to stand by the award, provided the other side does the same.

This view, embodied in words as Dr. Palmer would have so well known how, would have been the best possible. So far as the Northern overture expresses real and honest Christian desires for charity, as it doubtless did on the part of some, it would have met them in the like spirit. And so far as this overture was the plan of diplomatists to put us seemingly in the wrong, it would have been perfectly "checkmated" by this answer. Without seeming to meet a pretended friendly advance with the language of accusation, it would have unmasked the fact, all-important to the question, that all the aggression was on their side. Their game of "making capital" would have been effectually spoiled; and that without our compromising our "manners" in the judgment of the most captious. The profession of a desire for just peace would have been brought to the touchstone, by proposing to settle all the property-claims justly: the very thing the plotters among them

never meant to do. Thus "the tables would have been turned." Last and chiefly, this answer would have been *strictly and historically true*; and would have set in a glorious light the wonderful forbearance, charity and justice maintained by our church under the fiercest provocations.

Our next blunder was to go into regular complimentary intercourse with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. And our next was the closer alliance with the Reformed (Dutch) Church. These annual interchanges are impractical, useless, fulsome, and often insincere, in bad taste, unnecessary to the real maintenance of Christian relations, and increasingly obnoxious to sober minds. But our special point is: that it was very rash in us to be thus needlessly complicating our external relations *with anybody*, when we had before us a dangerous and troublesome question of relations with our former associates. The next and worse blunder was the appointment of commissioners to the Baltimore Conference, as it was foreshadowed. Then, at least, we should have given the answer which we have described, and should have refused to send any commissioners, save for the purpose of taking all property-suits out of court. The worst blunder of all was the pledge given by our Assembly of 1875, at St Louis, that we would enter into the annual exchange of complimentary delegates with the *omnibus* Assembly as soon as they should do one thing—retract their libels on us as schismatics, heretics and blasphemers, in "a few plain words." This pledge our Assembly gave in sanctioning a statement to that amount, made by our commissioners at Baltimore. These had divided our *gravamina* against the *omnibus* body into two groups: the one containing all those terrible usurpations by which they had violated the constitution of Christ's church and crushed the liberty of conscience; the other containing all the insults and slanders heaped upon Southern Christians. Our commission argued that, were the question one of fusion, it would be necessary to require as a prerequisite the amendment of those usurpations; but while the question was one of fraternal correspondence, it was proper for us to require only the retraction of the slanders. This is a grave mistake. It appears thus from this thought: Historically, the meaning of this "fraternal correspondence" is to express a special harmony of doctrine and order, and a special confi-

dence and approval, singling out the beloved object even from among the rest of our brethren of the visible body of Christ. Now, then, this position of our commissioners places us in this most unhandsome attitude, viz.: that while a wrong done to our personal good name and feelings is an insuperable obstacle, the gravest wrongs done to the rights and honor of Jesus Christ our Lord are not regarded by us as any obstacle at all to our professing special harmony of sentiment, confidence and approbation for the doers. Let only the libel that galls us personally be withdrawn, and then we seem to have no objection to testify, by these historical, typical and solemn formalities, our especial love and approval for those who thus wound our Master, singling them out, even among the rest of his servants, thus to honor them while they dishonor their and our Lord! That is, we seem to care much for our own, little for Christ's, credit.

Secondly, We ought never to have made such a pledge, because common foresight would have taught us that it would be sure to be entangling. The past should have taught us what use our *omnibus* Presbyterians *would* make of it, just the use they *have* made of it. It was certain that they would pass some deceptive action, seeming to make us amends, and yet not doing it, which would "keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope." And thus it was certain that our discussion of vital principles would be degraded into pitiful logomachies and word-splittings, which would soon become sapless and void of interest to manly, serious minds among us, and would throw the apple of discord among ourselves. All this has been verified, and it shows that it was on an ill-starred day our Assembly made this conditional pledge.

But, thirdly, The main reason against it is this: *We ought to be withheld by solemn, conscientious obligations to Christ and his people, from going into any special correspondence with those Presbyterians, on any terms whatsoever, or at any time.* Hence we ought candidly to have told them so at first and ever after. But our third point is the one which will meet most dissent, and hence it must be fully sustained.

If we are not much mistaken, every intelligent Southern man secretly sympathizes with the sentiment we here candidly avow, that we ought to have as little as possible to do with Yankee Presbyterians, except rendering them good for evil in the offices

of mercy toward suffering. But many are still hag-ridden by the feeling that they cannot "save their manners and their meat." They feel that, somehow, Christian decencies must force them into this distasteful and perilous connection. They are timid, and afraid to "face the music" of a one-sided and arrogant opinion, in the unfriendly Christian world. Now, the drift of our argument shall be to re-assure and undeceive all such minds, and to lift this question up to the height of the grand moral obligations on which it should be decided.

Good men are deceiving themselves with this view: that past grievances ought not to prevent "fraternal relations" with those whom we recognize as, notwithstanding the wrongs they have done us, Christian brethren. This seems almost self-evident: that we should not be *unfraternal* towards admitted *fratres*! But we ask: What are "fraternal relations"? It is a singular fact, that in all this tedious debate, we have never had that question carefully answered; *fraternal relations have never been defined*! And here has been another of our blunders. We have allowed the Northern Presbyterians, without question, to beg the whole question; and to assume that "fraternal relations" are nothing else than a certain very questionable, useless and fulsome custom of interchanging annual compliments and flatteries by dignified delegates. Thus, we permit them to prepare the way for charging us with unchristian conduct, should our convenience, taste or safety prompt us to decline that ensnaring usage. It has been a shrewd trick on their part; and we have suffered it, with a simplicity singular to behold. The spectacle will appear the more amazing when it appears, as we shall show, that the true *fraternal relations have all along been maintained on our side*, and are already in full force on our side, notwithstanding intense provocations. The truly catholic doctrine concerning Christian unity and charity is this: that the catholic church of Christ exists in several denominations, necessitated by geographical, national, linguistic, and social distinctions, and the unavoidable infirmities of human thought; that no other general unity exists, or is possible, between these parts, than a spiritual unity of beliefs and sentiments and obedience to a common Head, Christ; that each denomination, while managing its own affairs independently, should respect

the rights of other denominations, and recognize their valid existence.

Hence, fraternal relations between distinct churches consist in this recognition ; in admitting the validity of each others' ordination, sacraments and disciplinary verdicts ; in respecting each others' church-rights, institutions, property and enterprises for evangelizing the world ; in holding ministerial and Christian communion in individual cases, according to the individual merits thereof ; and in suitable acts of Christian hospitality and alms-giving, when needed by persons journeying from home, or destitute, or afflicted. THESE ARE FRATERNAL RELATIONS. When high prelatists scout our ordination as invalid ; when immersionists ignore our baptism and exclude us as unbaptized from the Lord's supper ; when either proselyte our members and treat our disciplinary acts against offenders as null and void, *they violate fraternal relations*. But that very questionable and sycophantic usage, the mutual interchange of compliments, *is not fraternal relations*. In importance, it does not bear a larger ratio to the real and the important fraternal relations than the paring of a man's finger-nail does to his living body. Now, the important fact is, that *we have maintained* these real fraternal relations (and are maintaining them now), towards the *omnibus* Presbyterian Church, during all the times when they were unchurching us, usurping our spiritual liberties, hounding on a civil faction to seek our blood, anathematizing us, arrogantly nullifying our church rights and existence, grasping our property, and dividing our congregations. And is it not a cool proceeding that they, the only parties who have ever interrupted fraternal relations at all, should, in the face of these facts, come to us and pertinaciously exact of us that *we shall restore* fraternal relations or else be charged as uncharitable? Verily, it is enough to take a plain man's breath away! And is it not a strange thing that we should have endured this with an amiable verdancy unsurpassed among victims? Verily it is a match for Ahab's coolness in charging that Elijah was "troubling Israel." It is high time for us to assert what is the truth, that we have done all, and more than all, which charity and fraternity require. It is high time we had the candor and clearness to say to our accusing woovers: "Amend your own aggressions, and then fraternal relations will be perfect, without *our* doing anything at all.

DANGEROUS ALLIANCES.

Some brethren hoodwink themselves with this argument: "these Presbyterians were formerly our associates; they bear the same name with us; they profess to hold the same doctrines and constitution. Hence, as soon as they make the amends required by our self-respect, we shall be obliged, for decency's sake, to enter into relations or special intimacy with them.

The proper inference to be drawn from their premises is exactly the opposite. Because they do bear the same name, profess the same creed, and were lately our associates, therefore they are the very people whose intimacy would most endanger our doctrinal and moral purity; and for that very reason, we should have least to do with them. It is not from Yankee Congregationalism, or Methodism, or Immersionism, or even Northern Popery, that the present danger to our orthodoxy, moral purity, and Presbyterian order arises! How many of our members ever read their journals, or frequent their institutions of learning, or, indeed, hear or care anything special about those parties? No; the peril of having our principles sophisticated—an imminent peril—is from these former associates; and it is because of the former intimacy that the peril rises thence. A very plain parallel will evince this. A parent, returning from a journey, learns that small-pox is somewhat prevalent in his city. Where? Well, more in certain remote suburbs, where it is quite prevalent and deadly; but it has also infected the family of a near neighbor, equal and intimate. Does not this parent then say: "I do not regard the disease in those distant suburbs, for my children never frequent them; but the point of danger is this friend's family near me, because his children and mine have mixed so familiarly." As a sensible man, he says little or nothing about the distant infection, but he straitly charges his family to maintain an absolute non-intercourse with their late neighbor. Now let us suppose that this neighbor had lately outraged him by sundry gratuitous insults and injuries; and that this parent, therefore, begins to reason: "I profess to be a Christian. Christians ought to be forgiving. My late intimate, now my very uncharitable injurer, stands ready to brand me as being uncharitable, if I betray even a just resentment. Therefore it will be necessary for me to abstain from every appear-

ance of coolness towards him, and to have my children keep up all their former intimacies, even if they do catch the pestilence." Is this Christian charity, or quixotry?

For, in fact, Southern Christianity is in imminent peril from any and every association with this *omnibus* church. Again, we find ourselves under a necessity to make room for a fair hearing, by putting in a *caveat* against the quixotic charity, and fear of compromising our manners, in our own brethren. Some of them will recoil from the idea of grounding a line of policy on an assumed superiority of our own. They will ask, is not this too much like the Pharisee who says, "Stand by thyself; come not nigh me, for I am holier than thou?" Our reply shall be stubborn facts. We can easily hold our position, without arrogance. We may put the matter thus: we are a set of miserable sinners, we Southern Presbyterians, so that we have so many spiritual diseases and corruptions, that, for that very reason, we cannot stand the addition of the few others we shall imbibe from those excellent people, the *omnibus* Presbyterians. So leaky a ship as ours cannot afford to risk any more lading. But more seriously: if God, in his sovereign grace, and by means, in large part, profoundly afflictive and humbling, has indeed honored our unworthy church with a knowledge of and value for orthodoxy, scriptural church order, and moral purity, dare we proceed, under the pretence of a lazy, cowardly, sham humility, to compromise that sacred charge by groundless alliances with those who have betrayed those gifts and will corrupt them in us? We ask this question with a solemn emphasis; we lay it on our brethren's consciences. We challenge them as guardians of the "church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood," to gainsay or evade these facts: that Southern Presbyterianism, with all its faults (and they are many), yet has some things peculiar to it: a simpler and purer social morality, not yet so corrupted by enormous aggregations of commercial and manufacturing wealth; a secular periodical literature less tinctured with evolutionism, materialism, and atheism; a more scriptural and earnest style of preaching; a sounder orthodoxy, and a more Presbyterian church order; and that these things *are worth preserving*. That the whole drift and aim, intentional and unintentional, of Northern effort, is to *Yankeeize the South*; in which process, if effectual, the South, while it may gain

certain secular advantages of money-getting, must lose these religious blessings; and while we, as guardians of the church of Christ, have no business either with procuring or hindering these secular changes, it is our right and solemn duty to watch over and preserve these spiritual advantages. That since the overthrow of the States and their independence, there remains no other bulwark against the flood of Yankee innovations in religion and morals, save our ecclesiastical separation and independence. Hence it appears, that it is not a matter of privilege and preference, but a matter of solemn duty and responsibility, that we must preserve our separation and independence jealously, for Christ's sake, and especially against our former associates.

For, we repeat, it is in part the fact that they were our former associates which makes their intimacy especially dangerous to us. And now that we may know what sort of intimacy this would be, it becomes our positive duty to inquire dispassionately, but faithfully, into the present *status* and tendencies of this *omnibus* church. Let us "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." First, then, must be considered the attitude of the church as to its usurping, tyrannical and popish claims, from the "Spring resolutions" of 1861 onward, to legislate against the secular rights of opinion of its own members, and coërcé their consciences in matters not ordained of God. This resolution against Presbyterianism is to-day asserted and held by them, as witness their absolute refusal to disclaim it, their embodiment of the tyrannical decision of the supreme secular court in their Digest, and the declarations of all their leading men. Next comes the thorough abolitionizing of the whole body. It now stands, on this matter, precisely in that false doctrine which, in 1837, helped to decide our fathers and us to separate from them; and which, in 1858, constrained the "United Synod" (now a part of ourselves) to shake off the dust of their feet against them. This Abolitionism, born of French Jacobinism, Socinianism and infidelity, with its deadly consequences of denying the Mosaic inspiration and the integrity and morality of the apostles, the *omnibus* church has expressly made its own. Next came the reversal of all the glorious doctrinal testimonies of 1837-'38, and the embracing again of the New School errors, which our fathers then condemned

and cast out; by their unconditional fusion with the New School. The attempt is vainly made to cover this defection, by saying that they received the New School on precisely the same terms on which the Southern Assembly received the United Synod. But "circumstances alter cases." We did, indeed, receive the United Synod on "the Confession pure and simple;" but it was because, upon express examination and comparison of doctrinal views, it was ascertained that the United Synod and we understood the Confession in the same sense. The *omnibus* Assembly fused itself with the New School notwithstanding, although *it had made a similar comparison of doctrinal views, and had ascertained that the Confession was not held in the same sense.* We and the United Synod met on the old Confession, because we knew we were agreed; these parties did it when they knew they were not agreed. It was the New School Assembly, sitting at Harrisburg, Pa., which expressly triumphed, compelling the other to surrender its Old Schoolism in order to fusion. It was virtually stipulated *that every phase of doctrine which the New School had tolerated should be accredited in the omnibus church.* For instance, Dr. Hatfield loudly and ostentatiously announced this as the claim he meant to stand by, and the *omnibus* Assembly rewarded him by making him its stated clerk, as he to-day continues to be.

This fusion manifestly makes it a broad church. Let the following symptoms of a diffusive and all-penetrating license of doctrine be noted. A few years ago, Mr. H. W. Beecher, by invitation, delivered the commencement address to the divinity students of Princeton Seminary, at the close of which Dr. Charles Hodge extended to him a formal handshaking on the public *rostrum*. To understand the significance of this transaction, let it be set over against a previous one at the same place. In the *ante-bellum* days of old Dr. Alexander, when Princeton was still Princeton, the students proposed to extend an invitation to the Rev. George Bush, to deliver a similar address to them. He was an *alumnus* of Princeton, once a prime favorite and *protégé* of Dr. Alexander, and then tinctured with some Swedenborgian crotchets about the resurrection and prophecy; but still a man of blameless sanctity, of a devout life, and of true erudition. But when Dr. Alexander heard of the proposal he sent for the students and forbade it, saying that the Seminary

was a church-school, and an exponent of her doctrinal purity; and he therefore could not permit such an honor to be paid to a man of defective theology, lest the reputation of the Seminary for orthodoxy should be tarnished. Let the two pictures be compared.

Another evidence of latitudinarianism is seen in the preaching of laymen and women in that communion. The performances of the Rev. Miss Smiley in the church of T. L. Cuyler will be recalled, and the great difficulty with which his presbytery partially restrained the innovation for a brief season. Since then we have seen the "church papers" ostentatiously parading appointments of women, including a negress, who aspired to be preachers. The public appearances of officers (females) in the women's mission societies tends in the same way. Of the extent to which the ministers of that church commit themselves to encouraging the innovation of lay-preaching, nothing need be said.

Another symptom may be found in the invitation of a Socinian, Dr. Peabody, to give formal instruction in a branch of theology to its students, by the Union Seminary in New York city. What else can any one expect but that every young minister of that church will feel himself authorized by that precedent to invite Socinians into his pulpit? It will be impossible for the authorities to object. Thus, the worst abuses of New England's looseness are transplanted into a church calling itself Presbyterian.

Another thing, which was not done in a corner, was the election of Dr. Patterson to a chair in their theological seminary near Chicago. In the famous "Swing trial," where an attempt was made to curb a heretic who audaciously flouted almost every characteristic of our creed, Dr. Patterson both spoke and voted for his acquittal. He was soon after promoted to the responsible post of an instructor of the future pastors of the church. It is said that when some Old School members of the *omnibus* body indicated a reluctance to confirm such an appointment, they were challenged by the latitudinarians in the Assembly to refuse, with the threat, that if they dared to withhold confirmation on this ground, it should be a *casus belli* in "the happy family;" whereupon the valiant defenders of orthodoxy recoiled, and availed themselves of an indirection to avoid

the collision. Dr. Patterson, the justifier of Swing, is now a teacher of the teachers of this church.

Once more, a Mr. McCune, near Cincinnati, in regular membership in that presbytery, took in hand to form a new, creedless, broad church, upon the precise theory of the great heresiarch, Alexander Campbell, leaving out the immersion. In organizing his project, he committed flagrant irregularities, actually enrolling in his unlawful assemblage members of the Presbyterian Churches of his own presbytery. At his instalment, Dr. Morris, professor of the Lane Seminary, and moderator of the *omnibus* Assembly, presided and preached the sermon, and bade good speed to the enterprise. He has never been called to account for this extraordinary act by the church. The attempt of Dr. Thomas Skinner, his co-presbyter, to do so, was rejected in a disorderly and tyrannical manner, and a storm of obloquy plucked down on the head of the defender of righteousness.

These things have been done in high places. Time would fail to tell of the unhealthy signs manifesting themselves in a multitude of churches of less note; of the flood of negative preaching in which the unpalatable, old fashioned truths of depravity, predestination, eternal punishments, are silently but systematically pretermitted; of ruling elders who never read the Confession they swore to uphold, and who flout its distinctive doctrines with disdain; of the torrent of worldly conformities, lascivious dances, theatre-goings, and often dissipations which have come into nominally Christian families.

The most ominous feature of that church is a general one; the fearful neutralizing and solvent power which its ecclesiastical radicalism has over the conservative men in it. They go in seemingly orthodox, Old School, staunch: they proclaim as they enter, that they are going in to combat for orthodoxy. But somehow, after a little, their orthodoxy is practically silenced, and their influence for truth somehow neutralized. This radical giant easily carries, in its all-digesting maw, the most solid and refractory lumps of Old-Schoolism, and goes gaily on its path of radicalism and innovation, with scarcely an intestinal qualm. It is evidently its consciousness of this well tried power which makes it so willing to swallow Southern orthodoxy also.

Now our point is, that such company is not safe for those

who love God's truth ; and that if we mean to be faithful to our charge, we must avoid entangling alliances with it.

THE REASON WHY.

Two cavils will be raised against this our statement. Nobody can gainsay the facts, any more than he can dispute their ominous gravity. But it will be said that it is uncharitable to parade the faults of our neighbor when he is making friendly overtures. We reply, that it is his indelicate forwardness in pressing those overtures which justifies and necessitates the statement. If he is exposed in a way he does not like, he has himself to blame for it. Let us suppose that there was a virtuous father of daughters, who had a very fussy and obtrusive neighbor of worse than doubtful morals. The father knows his discreditable antecedents, but, like a charitable Christian, covers them with the vail of silence. Meantime his neighbor frequently demands the privileges of a social intimate and equal in the father's house, and is met with a civil but firm reserve. At length the fellow has the folly to insist, in the presence of the neighborhood, on admission to intimacy, and to *demand the reason why* he is not entitled to it. Can he complain, then, if the father, thus driven to the wall, speaks in self-defence, and says, "I am justified in declining your intimacy, because I know your habits are vicious. That is my reason, if you will have it" ?

The other cavil will be this : Good brethren will say, "All these statements and charges would be very timely if we were proposing 'organic union' with Northern Presbyterians. But we only propose 'fraternal relations.'" To this, there are two crushing answers : this complimentary intercourse, erroneously named "fraternal relations," will lead to that calamitous fusion. It will be as distinct a complicity with the errors and corruptions charged, though not so criminal, as fusion itself. Let the latter proposition be illustrated first. The reader cannot be too often reminded of the historical significance of this usage in our church. It was a very emphatic type and pledge of an especial harmony of doctrinal and ecclesiastical views, of especial confidence, and especial affection. Thus, the Old Assembly never extended those compliments to any, however evangelical, except the orthodox Congregationalists, in a day when they were wholly

Calvinistic and semi-Presbyterian, and to the strict Presbyterian bodies, like the Associate Reformed and the Reformed Dutch. The Cumberland Presbyterians departed from our creed, retaining our government. The Old Assembly did not maintain this correspondence with them. The New School departed from us in 1838. The Old Assembly never consented to this species of intercourse. [And it is worthy of the most serious reflection that when it did begin, since the war, *fusion came close on its heels!*] Now, if we extend this complimentary intercourse to the *omnibus* Presbyterians, we shall be understood by the Christian world, by them, and by our own people, as professing just what the usage always meant—especial approbation, harmony of views and unity. Is it not obvious, then, that to enter into this relation will stultify our conscientious testimony against their errors, and involve us in a guilty complicity? It is proposed that we shall extend to these people a mark of intimacy which we do not extend to the Southern Methodist Church. Yet the latter has never bowed to Cæsar, nor defiled its records with murderous war—resolves aimed against our throats. It is in theory Arminian; and yet is there heard in its pulpits more gospel, and more distinctively sound doctrine, than is uttered by the effete Calvinism of the Northern Presbyterian body. And it is, finally, virtually Presbyterian in its present church order. Yet, by this fulsome intercourse with the *omnibus* Assembly, we should solemnly declare to all that we are in fuller harmony with its principles than with our Southern Methodist brethren, of whom so much good can be truthfully said.

And, second, because the former charge is true; therefore such an intercourse will be the harbinger and the sure means of our disastrous fusion with this corrupt body of nominal Presbyterians. It is sufficient proof that these intending allies and devourers are candid enough, for once, to tell us, “out aloud,” *that they design to use the intercourse to effect a fusion*, and that this is the only use they have for it. Witness the declaration of Dr. Talmage: “We don’t mean to stop at fraternal relations; we mean to have *conjugal relations*.” Witness the testimony given in the *Southern Presbyterian* newspaper. Now, is it not almost fatuity, in view of this declared purpose, and of the endless pertinacity and obtrusiveness of the Yankee nature for a

Southern man, professing not to desire fusion, to crave this intercourse? Solomon said, "In vain is the net spread *in the sight of any bird.*" He also thought there was nothing new under the sun. But is not this a novel verdancy with which the Southern birds walk into the nets, while the very fowler shows them how he expects to snare them! And here, an independent mind cannot but see the indecency of this urgency for such intercourse on the part of Northern men, after we have told them, in solemn legislative acts, that we wish to preserve our independence. Still to press this intimacy, and to persist with the avowed design of undermining that independence which we have told them we cherish, comes very near to an affront. It does not mend matters that the pressure is veiled as a courtesy.

But these men are "wise in their generation;" they know how they expect this intimacy to work. First, they will perpetually ply the argument: "this fraternal intercourse is a confession of Southern Presbyterians that they are one with us in principles. So, then, there is nothing between us but a remnant of anger; and it is clearly the duty of Christians to quench that." This pretended argument will mislead thousands, and paralyze our defence. Second, these astute schemers know that the intercourse will work thus: on the one hand, it will gain, annually, for two or three of their most plausible men an excellent opening for a week's electioneering among the members of our Assemblies, which these commissioners will not fail to use diligently. And on the other hand, it will enable them annually to propitiate two or three leading Southern men attending their Assemblies, by glowing professions of love, hospitalities in their palatial mansions, nice hack-rides, sumptuous dinners with a temperate display of champagne, compliments, and gifts. These leading men will be expected to come back and work at home. But, third, the diplomatists "calculate" that each batch of delegates will, of course be restrained by the courtesies due to hosts, in their public addresses, to such topics and allusions as are complimentary. All differences and uncomplimentary charges must be sunk out of sight on such occasions: it is very bad manners for an invited guest to allude to his host's "skeleton in the closet" while sitting at his board. The annual speeches will be spread through the whole land in the papers. The consequence will be, that all our younger

members will be so fed on this flattering *pabulum* of mutual laudations, that in five years there will not be a suspicion among them that the Southern Assembly thinks any less of the *omnibus* Assembly's principles than it does of its own. For do not they meet, at considerable expense annually, for the express purpose of telling what exceedingly pretty fellows they think each other? How far off will fusion then be?

And let those who wish to tamper with these risks consider what this fusion will practically mean. Even though every darker trait of Northern doctrine and order be denied, and the poison of doctrinal and moral corruption which we fear be only a dream, yet every sober mind must know that fusion would mean this: the convulsing and rending of our churches upon the question of negro equality in our church courts—a question lately so critical among us, though now happily settled by us for ourselves—and by the *omnibus* Assembly in exactly an opposite perilous sense; the crippling of our periodicals by the intrusion of Northern religious papers, pressed by large capital, cheap prices, and all invading agents; supplanting our worthy editors among their own home patrons; the successful candidating of Northern ministers in all our lucrative and prominent congregations and professorships—successful, because our Southern people, in their generosity, are so prone to believe that other people's wares are better than the home article, because they come from afar, and supplanting our most promising men in their own legitimate career; the partial emptying and crippling of our seminaries and other schools, by the attractive offers of the Northern seminaries; the collapse of our publishing agency, with all the fruits of the money and toil expended to build it up; and the unchecked influx into our Sunday-schools and families of a semi-infidel, abolition, political literature, which will mingle insults of our dead patriots and our sainted fathers with pious platitudes; the crippling of our Mission and Sustentation works, now such a blessing to our Zion, by misconception, neglect and financial difficulties in Northern Boards, so that the fair, reviving, blossoming fields of our church, now so fast ripening to a glorious harvest, will shrivel again, as under a blighting frost. So far as human sagacity, reading the lessons of experience, can see, the Southern church, in compromising her independence now, would occasion the loss

of thousands of souls whom she may reasonably hope, while independent, to bring to Christ. We plead the cogent argument of facts. Her separation and independence have inspired her with new energy, purity, peace, and efficiency for good. Must not the sacrifice of that independence be at the cost of all this increase? If there be any who would tamper with this danger, we would solemnly lay upon their consciences the blood of all the souls, in all the succeeding generations, whom this collapse in our activities will cast out into Satan's empire.

SIGNIFICANCE.

"But if we stand out stiffly, the Christian world, and the world's world, and the secular editors, and the polite politicians, will revile us as uncharitable, and will say that we, pretended followers of the 'Prince of Peace,' persist in keeping strife alive after everybody else is reconciled. The commercial people are reconciled, and radicals and ex-Confederates traffic together. The very politicians are reconciled, and radical and conservative congressmen can take their juleps, and crack their jokes, and gamble together, with perfect harmony. All the fault-finders will cry shame upon us, for that we are the last to stand aloof." Such is the plea.

To this cowardly argument, one answer is to ask whether it becomes guardians of God's truth and of the interests of immortal souls to truckle to the clamors of an unfriendly or a sordid worldly opinion. Dare we sacrifice duty thus to timidity? And it does not much become us, who are contending for the sacred principle of the independence of Christ's spiritual kingdom, us who refused to let the legislation of that spiritual commonwealth be tampered with in the interests either of Federal Government or Confederacy, now to subordinate the purity and peace of Christ's church, and the safety of immortal souls, to the interests of a political combination. Christ's church has no mission to look to the making or unmaking of a president, or of a successful political combination; her business is to watch for souls.

Another answer is to point to the contrasted principles and aims of worldly associations and of spiritual communion. The objects of traders and politicians are selfish and sordid. They only ask, touching their commercial alliances, "Will it pay?"

Of proposed commercial allies they only ask, "Are they solvent? Are they in trading credit? Can money be made out of them?" If so, the ends of the alliance are gained. So, the only questions asked with a view to a political alliance are similar. But the meaning and end of church communion are wholly different. This spiritual alliance, if it is not an unholy hypocrisy, is a declaration of conscientious, moral unity and approbation in high and holy principles and character, and of a community of holy purpose to glorify God and bless souls, through the manifestation of these pure and sacred truths. It is, therefore, right and intelligible, and an imperative duty, that Christians shall refuse this pretended alliance of unity where the harmony of principles does not really exist; refuse it to the people to whom we extend Christian forbearance and charity. This result was predicted and justified at the beginning of the war, in a very apt illustration, by one who may possibly be loath now to hear his own argument repeated. In May, 1861, when the "Spring resolutions" had just been passed by the Northern Assembly, Dr. Nathan L. Rice, then pastor in New York, was talking with Dr. William J. Hoge, then also associate pastor with Dr. Spring in the Brick church. Both of them deplored the resolutions; and Dr. Rice lamented them especially, because he foresaw that they laid the foundation of a separation more permanent than the political disunion. "Nations," said he, "cannot fight always; this war must end, after some campaigns, either by some composition or the conquest of one party by the other. Then convenience, self-interest, will speedily bring the people of the belligerent sections into peaceable business relations. But this church division, so mischievously made by these resolutions, will continue because it will involve a question of unchangeable principle. It will be as when some earthquake has rent a yawning fissure across a tract of country, cleaving alike the soil of the meadow and the rocks of the hill. One of those geologic 'subsidences' then comes on of which scientific men tell us, and brings the edges of the chasm into contact again. The earth of the meadow easily adheres, and obliterates the cleft, because it is earth, dirt, yielding, unsteady, sordid. The granite of the hills cannot weld, even when the parts are brought together, because it is rock, solid, imperishable." The analogy is just. Traders, politicians and bankers can easily homologate

with the men who, a little while ago, were seeking their throats, because their motives are only selfish or sordid. All they want in the association is gain or serviceableness. No approbation or confidence is involved. The sordid, ductile mud can easily weld. But Christian unity and association must be founded in genuine confidence, moral approval, and a heartfelt sympathy in the same holy affections, and love for the same holy principles. If they are not thus founded, they are a hypocrisy, all the more odious to a God of truth, because they deceitfully ape affections so sacred and amiable.

If the actions of a part of the visible church catholic are such that we cannot justly feel this approval and moral confidence, what is our duty towards it? The scriptural reply is clear; *our duty is forbearance*; not an oily and odious pretence of affections which are neither real, nor possible, nor right, in the case. This duty, we firmly assert, the Southern church has been enabled to fulfil towards her persecutors and detractors to an admirable degree. To God's grace be all the praise! We have been graciously restrained from every act which overpassed "the judgment of charity"—from unchurching, anathematizing or assailing them—from invading their rights, intruding into their congregations, or grasping their property. We have not made any slimy pretence of unconsciousness of the frightful wrongs we have had to endure—a pretence which usually betrays, not charity, but the intensest malice; but we have virtually said, like David to the persecuting Saul, "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; but my hand shall not be upon thee." We repeat, the duty of Christians towards grievous injuries is not an affectation of fellowship and confidence, but forbearance and forgiveness. The Scriptures, which usually give us both precepts and precedents exactly suited to every emergency, furnish us a guide here exactly fitted to our case. When the persecutor Saul of Tarsus, after his reported conversion, came to Jerusalem (Acts ix. 26–28), and assayed to join himself to the disciples, they strictly declined his communion. We do not read that they sought in any way to retaliate on him the blood he had shed. But they withheld their confidence. And it was not until his profession of repentance was attested by the good Barnabas that they received him into their fellowship. We do not read that the

widow of the murdered Stephen felt herself constrained by Christian charity to enter into "fraternal relations" with Saul the pharisee. Had she affected this, we surmise that the robust and healthy Christian conscience of that apostolic church would only have disapproved her deceit. Saul had professed repentance, however. But this did not satisfy the good sense of those primitive saints. They waited for evidence that Saul's profession was sincere. The *omnibus* Presbyterians have never even professed repentance. When they have done that, and have also evinced the sincerity of their repentance in a sufficient manner, it will be time enough to talk of "fraternal relations." We freely say that we are not concerned to be more charitable than Christ's inspired apostles and the flock they guided; their example is good enough for us.

SINCERITY.

This discussion cannot properly close without some notice of the unjust and sophistical and uncharitable charges which some among us have made against this righteous Christian sentiment in the Southern people. It has been most unjustly confounded with malice and revenge. Their steadfast attitude of disapprobation towards wrong has been set in an insulting contrast with the professed love of these gentlemen for our injurers—a profession which is an index either of a lack of candor, or of an immoral indifference to wrong-doing. They have declared that they have no patience with a church whose separated attitude "is founded only in spite." They represent the duties of charity are such as to require, because we happen to be the sufferers under enormous injuries, the stultification of our consciences, and the confounding of good and evil, light and darkness. They say that they should be ashamed of themselves if they could not concede to these Presbyterian destroyers of the South "as much sincerity in their political course as they claim for themselves in theirs." They so work on the generosity and susceptibility of Southern Christians as to produce almost the feeling that they must outrage every moral instinct of their hearts, to escape a petulant charge of "sore-headedness" from insolent oppressors. And by a climax of logical confusion, they would have us conclude that we must not estimate the greatest breaches of Christian obligation as reprehensible, because, forsooth, they

happen to have been perpetrated, in so large part, in the sphere of our political rights, lest we should be found guilty of departing from that "non-political character of the church" for which we contend so stoutly. These perversions cannot be tolerated.

As to the last point, we wonder whether these persons ever apprehended the difference between aggressive and defensive action? By this wondrous logic it may also be argued, that because it is unchristian to assail the life of a neighbor, therefore it is equally unchristian to make forcible resistance against that neighbor. And because it is very unclerical for one of those ministerial swindlers, with whom the North has been blessed, to steal our money from the bank, therefore it is un-ecclesiastical for us to pursue him at the law to get back our own. The boldest cheat put upon us by a professed brother in a horse-trade could not justify us, on this logic, in either withdrawing our Christian confidence, or bringing charges against him before his church-session, for horse-flesh is non-ecclesiastical. No rogue could ever be disciplined for theft, because a session is not a county court, unless he stole a pulpit Bible, or something of that sort! The answer to these absurdities is very easy. The church has no commission to make moral rules; but it is expressly her commission to administer the moral rules God has made, whether the breach of God's rule be in a matter ecclesiastical or secular. However secular the thing may be which was the subject of the transgression, the transgression itself is within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction if it breaks a law which God has enjoined on Christians. The horse-flesh was most thoroughly non-ecclesiastical, yet the discipline of a theft of horse-flesh is most thoroughly ecclesiastical, if the theft was committed by a church member. Had it been true that God *enacted* that the secession of a sovereign commonwealth from a confederation to which it had sovereignly acceded was the sin of rebellion, then, notwithstanding that confederations of commonwealths are secular things, it would have been competent to the Assembly of 1861 to declare us rebels. In short, this miserable sophism is precisely the counterpart of that by which papal Rome supported her licentious and wicked claim to exempt the clergy from civil jurisdiction, even when they broke civil laws.

Secondly, we expose the misrepresentation of Southern feeling by the practical question: What manner of Christians are those among us who feel these sentiments of moral disapprobation for our injurers most profoundly, and who are most reluctant to enter a fellowship which their consciences do not sustain? Are they the captious, the spiteful, the worldly? No; it is well known that these sentiments prevail most profoundly among our best Christians—our purest, most unselfish, most beneficent Christian women, whose lives are a ministration of self-denying love, and who have borne with angelic patience a long discipline of affliction and injury; among that home-eldership who are the true bulwark of our ecclesiastical structure; among the most steadfast and the least sophisticated of our people. We protest against the injustice which paints this righteous principle as mere spite and stubbornness. It is a libel against those of whom “the world is not worthy.” In fact, the reason why this best class of our people feel these sentiments most strongly is this: that they have the firmest principles of right, the most honest consciences, and clear, healthy, moral discrimination, unsophisticated by worldly policy and latitudinarian indifference.

Is it said that our injurers were as sincere in their political course as we in ours, and therefore we should extend the same charity to them we claim for ourselves. The first answer is: that *we do not claim from them a charity which is to embrace us in “fraternal relations,”* they meantime “sincerely” believing us to be “rebels,” “traitors,” “miserable sinners,” “heretics,” and “blasphemers.” The claim would be preposterous. We want no such charity on such terms. The offer of it to us on such terms is an inevitable hypocrisy, or else a criminal indifference to truth and righteousness. Were the Northern Presbyterians *entitled to hold us as such*, it would be impudence in us to ask of them any other charity than forbearance and mercy.

Our memory goes back far enough to be aware what comes of this unnatural mingling of imputations of crime and professions of love in the same breath. Instead of seeming to us amiable, it has an air of ghastly unwholesomeness; it smells of blood. The old Assembly once sent a venerable minister from our Synod of Georgia upon one of these “fraternal” missions to the abolitionized Congregational Association of Vermont. He made it known that he held slaves. But the meeting still

rung with denunciations of slavery ; and the favorite illustration of the orators was to equal it to the sin of polygamy, which, as they said, was also legalized by Moses. When our venerable brother was invited to speak he made this point, with the straightforwardness of a man of sense and honesty : “ You say slaveholding is like the sin of polygamy. I told you that I hold five slaves. Yet me you call ‘ brother,’ and you invite me into the bosom of your families, and you heap kindnesses upon me (for which I am very thankful.) Now, were I a Mormon missionary with *five wives* in Deseret, instead of five slaves in Georgia, you would not thus countenance me. Hence I am obliged to see that there is *insincerity*, either in your condemnations or in your civilities. The two contradict each other. And I beseech you, cease this language of extravagance before it results in mischief.”

This plain dealing was very offensive. The clerical demagogues wished to ventilate their zeal in these fiery invectives ; but were willing that our good brother should take it all in a “ Pickwickian ” sense on that occasion. The result of this nauseous compound of hypocritical love and hypocritical indignation we have seen in a sea of blood and woe. We have had enough of it ! The “ fraternal relations ” so courteously maintained did not at all prevent the libels and slanders of abolitionists against their “ very dear brethren ” from educating a generation of invaders to cut our throats.

But the second answer is, that this sophism overlooks the fact that there are two kinds of sincerities. One is that of the murderer, Saul of Tarsus, when “ he verily thought that he did God service ” by persecuting his saints ; the other is that of the Apostle Paul, who, enlightened and sanctified “ as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God,” spake in Christ. We believe that the difference between “ mercy, judgment and truth ” on the one hand, and flagrant wrong, usurpation, cruelty, bad faith, on the other, is not ambiguous. We cannot so blaspheme that God, who wrote his law in men’s hearts, in the form of conscience, as to admit that Christian men can innocently mistake the one for the other with God’s Bible in their hands.

We shall be asked again : “ What, then, is to be the end of this difference ? Are Northern and Southern Christians to quarrel forever ? We reply : first, the question implies *a libel* ; for

in fact, *Southern Christians have not sought to quarrel for a day.* Had they been let alone, the "quarreling" would have been all on one side, and even the one-sided quarrel would have ended as soon as our oppressors satisfied their desires of usurpation. We should have suffered in silence. But, second, the honest attitude we recommend would lead at once, not to an endless quarrel, but to immediate *forbearance*, with separate independence; and this is the only righteous, and the least unseemly attitude possible where such differences exist and are irreconcilable. And, thirdly, if we have reason to suspect that we are the original criminals in this opposition, then the one and only way for us to end it is by repentance and public confession. But if we have no such reason, then the terminating of the difference is no concern of ours. That is God's prerogative. He must end it when and as he chooses; our part only is to see to it that we do not inflame it by "rendering evil for evil."

In conclusion, we assert, that our attitude of *forbearing separation*, instead of being unchristian or uncharitable, is precisely the one which the Christian sense of every good man, and every prudent church court, provides for the peace of the visible church, and the personal comfort and edification of injured Christians. Here, for instance, are two men, formerly Christian brethren, the one of whom is fixedly convinced that he has been cruelly injured by the other. Let us suppose that the session is either unable or unwilling to right the wrong effectually. Let us suppose, also, that the injured man is a thoroughly good, conscientious and charitable man. He will go to his pastor and speak substantially thus: "I feel that I am cruelly injured, and my injurer will give me no adequate redress. I do not desire to avenge myself. I have no wish to blazon his wrong-doing. But I cannot, without stultifying myself, feel or profess the former pleasing confidence. Now, then, I claim that the session should do one of two things—either right this wrong themselves, or else allow me to consult my own comfort, and the peace of the congregation, by giving me a letter of dismission to another Presbyterian church convenient to me, where I can worship God without this unpleasant contact with a man to whom it is impossible to exercise cordial confidence." We surmise that there is not a pastor, nor a session, nor a presbytery, in all the land, who would resist so reasonable and Chris-

tian a claim. *But this is just what we wish to do* as to our Presbyterian oppressors.

Returning now to the point from which we set out, we find that this desirable course is beset with entanglements, by means of the false moves already made by our own Assemblies. How may these mistakes be retrieved? This is a difficult question; for it is much easier to make blunders than to repair them. We seem to stand committed by the promise of our Baltimore Commissioners to send the complimentary delegates, provided the *omnibus* Assembly will retract their slanders. There is no likelihood that they will really retract them. But our peril is here: that they will make pretended amends, and thus introduce a quibbling, pettifogging contention into our own Assemblies; where some will contend that the amends proposed are virtually satisfying, and others will say that they are not; and the two parties will bandy verbal distinctions between each other. For our part, we stand prepared to assume the admitted Presbyterian position—that a mere administrative resolve of a previous Assembly does not bind a subsequent one. We would candidly say, next spring, that we have thought better of our position, and that *we withdraw the conditional promise made by the Assembly of 1875, especially as our overture was not frankly met by their cotemporaneous and their next Assembly.* This change should be explained as not implying any belligerent policy on our part, or any purpose to refuse a reasonable overture for adjustment of property questions, which are the only ones, after all, where any adjustment is, humanly speaking, likely to occur. We should accompany our change with the manly declaration that it infringes no vested right of anybody, and that we are entitled to consult our own peace, comfort and self-respect, by making it. Another legitimate policy would be quietly to abide the result of the pending overtures between the two Assemblies of 1876, and—if the *omnibus* Assembly does, in good faith, retract their accusations—appoint delegates to exchange salutations, and instruct them to require explicitly that the newly instituted fraternal intercourse shall at once be utilized to settle all property questions between the two denominations, and all their congregations and schools, by amicable reference. For it is these, and these alone, which really mar the Christian relations, and do discredit to religion. If they accede fairly, the

intercourse may be continued until all such adjustments are complete, and then terminate itself with mutual civilities, on the ground that all its practical ends are realized. If they refuse, the hollowness of their overtures will be manifest to all, and our emancipation from the whole entanglement easy and plain. There is a third solution, which would be eminently acceptable to us, and, we are persuaded, to many of our people. This would be courteously, but firmly, to *discontinue all our annual interchanges of delegates* with all other denominations, as a usage inconvenient, entangling, unnecessary to the maintenance of true fraternal relations, in bad taste, sycophantic and wholly fruitless of any useful results justifying the outlay of time and money. This is the solution we should altogether prefer. We should then await the result of pending overtures; and if they lead to a square retraction of the accusations against us, we should respond by sending, for the once, a single set of special commissioners, to attempt a settlement of the property questions. These adjusted, the intercourse should at once cease; and the fact that we had ceased to maintain it with any would take away the very pretext of offence.

THE ATLANTA ASSEMBLY AND FRATERNAL RELATIONS.¹

To the Editor of the South-Western Presbyterian :

I DESIRE to review calmly, but firmly, the proceedings of our late General Assembly at Atlanta in instituting new and more intimate intercourse with the Northern Assembly. This review I must preface with a few points :

1. To the plea that "it is an impropriety for any one to reopen this question after the Assembly has *settled it*, and *unanimously*," "I give place by subjection," no, not for a moment. With what face can those use this plea who have themselves just *unsettled* and reversed the more unanimous position of every Assembly since 1870? I say, "more unanimous," for the unanimity of the last action was only on the surface ; and, as I shall show, was not a real consent to the action taken, but a sort of helpless accord in the conviction that the Assembly had entangled itself in the meshes of its own indiscretions. The members who voted for the action are not satisfied with it. Dr. Brown, its defender, is not ; certainly the church is not : as is evinced by the fact, that of our six weeklies, four, without concert, promptly dissented. To assume, in the face of this fact, and of the great, broad, solemn ground-swell of disapprobation now pervading our church, that he who respectfully dissents is a disturber of the peace of our Zion, is a statement I cannot assent to.

2. To stigmatize old and honest servants of the church as "wranglers," because they choose to do their duty to her in the advocacy of her vital principles, is a trick rather too stale, and too frequently connected with the tactics of deserters of their own principles, to deter such as me. Nor do I permit any one to represent my position as one of unforgiving hate, in contrast with their new departure as Christian love and charity. With what seemliness can this come from men who, some years ago,

¹ A letter to the Editor of the *South-Western Presbyterian*, which appeared in that paper August 3, 1882.

professed to stand by us in defending the independence, the principles, and the honor of our church? They may if they choose paint themselves as then acting from mere spite; they must not paint me so. I then made the distinction clear between the resentment naturally awakened by Yankee persons and civil powers, assailing my personal property, civil rights, life and family—and their outrages did justify the highest resentment—and the moral opposition, required by duty, to *the attacks made by their church courts on Christ's truth and church*. The former sentiment we sought to suppress, in the exercise of the duty of Christian forbearance. The latter resistance we neither had, *nor have now*, any more right to suppress than we have to expunge a precept out of the Decalogue. Let this be remembered!

3. Nor shall I, for one, be deterred by the indecency of being called one of the "old war horses," as though the quarrel were ours only. If age, if a fidelity to the Southern church, which has imposed many toils, cares and sorrows; if long experience in her history and service, have deprived us of those common rights of free speech and argument possessed by all elders, and even members, then this taunt may be proper.

4. In view of the high principles involved, the argument that "since the politicians have come together, and the business men coalesced, it is high time the churches came together," is almost too thin to require answer. It overlooks several essential points. Our subjection to the same government with our former assailants is the result of force; our religious affiliations must be voluntary, or else are worthless. Business relations imply no sanction of, or responsibility for, the other party's theological or moral principles. In arranging with Brown or Jones to sell boots, or tallow, or calico, I should not endorse either his politics, or his theology. The kind of affiliation now required of us with Northern Christians does imply such endorsement of their doctrine and ecclesiastical principles; and without this, is dishonest.

5. Our Assembly and Presbyteries ought not to have taken the initiative. It was derogatory to their own self-respect, consistency, and good name. Take Dr. Brown's constant showing, which is that on which the Assembly professed to act: that the Northern Assembly had foully libelled us; that ours, acting with

the extreme of Christian forbearance, had disclaimed retaliation, but made an *amende* for the libel the sole condition of restored confidence, and had said, whenever you are ready with this, here is our hand. That the defamer should distinctly refuse this simple *amende* and abide stubbornly in this refusal; all this leaves for us one only attitude, which is to wait, and be silent. For us to go farther, and initiate another request for the *amende* so insultingly withheld, is more worthy of a spaniel than of a Christian. It implies a falsehood, *as though it were we*, the injured, *who were responsible for the scandal*, instead of them, the injurers. It converts our position, before so Christian and manly, at once into one cowardly and cringing. It was in the worst possible taste and judgment for any Presbytery to overture the Assembly to this step; and it was a great *faux pas* in the Assembly to take it.

But a greater one was the "concurrent resolution," so-called, which makes our church hypothetically confess a sin which she never committed, and which she has always held she never committed. She is made to say that, *provided* she has defamed and libelled the Northern church, she withdraws it; provided the Northern church, if it has defamed us, will withdraw her slanders. One thing is plain to any honest mind, that a manly individual, in the parallel case, would scorn such a basis of adjustment. The parable is analogous. For Dr. Brown says emphatically that our assertions of wrong action against the Northern church *were true*, and not libellous. He quotes Dr. Humphrey as declaring that we have never libelled or reviled his Assembly. It is vain for one to attempt to cover the crookedness of this action by pleading that our "*if*" does not specify any particular libel of which our Assembly was guilty. If it does not imply some sin of that sort in our Assembly, it is insincere. If it does, it is a sinful libel of our past Assemblies. This pretended brotherly reconciliation is vaunted as very Christian and lovely. What sort of a reconciliation is that to which insincerity and false accusation of our own brethren is the essential step? The apostle's plea was, "First *pure*, then peaceable." This new-fangled love makes itself *impure*, in order to be peaceable.

6. It was my privilege and honor to oppose the deceitful entanglement of our church in the "Pan Alliance." The events

at Atlanta show that I was right; for it is very plain to the clear-headed observer, that all those who were involved in that affair have found themselves embarrassed and "handicapped" now, in their efforts to adjust the new relations with this slandering "ally." But this by the way.

FRATERNAL RELATIONS.

Approaching now the centre of the subject, let us disentangle "fraternal relations" from the confusion designedly thrown around it by our Northern assailants. For twelve years they have been pleading for the "restoration of fraternal relations." The plea is deluding; because *fraternal relations have been all the time existing on our part towards them, except as ruptured by them.* What are "fraternal relations?" *The relations existing between Christian brethren not in the same denomination—* as between us and Lutherans, us and Southern Methodists, etc. These we have never withdrawn from Northern Presbyterians. They consist in ministerial and Christian communion, Christian charities and hospitalities, recognition of their sacraments, and, in general, of their standing as a valid branch of the church catholic. Hence the reply we should have made to the demand, "Restore fraternal relations," ought constantly to have been: "*You have them already, unless you please to rupture them on your side.*" And in restoring fraternal relations, in full form, to the Northern Presbyterians, without any amends or reparation, the moment they stopped cursing us, our Southern Assemblies showed a Christian forbearance and Christ-like spirit never surpassed on this earth; a spirit which I, for one, shall never hear disparaged without protest; a charity which, with any fair mind, would forever acquit them of the charge of spite in maintaining their righteous attitude on a wholly different point.

CORRESPONDENCE BY DELEGATES.

That other point, wrapped up under the foreign name of "fraternal relations," is the demand that we shall enter into *a special intercourse with the North, by annual delegates.* This is wholly another matter. It has a perfectly distinct, historical meaning. The Old School Assemblies, before the war, maintained fraternal relations with every valid, however imperfect, branch of the visible church. It kept up the particular inter-

course by annual delegates with very few—only the most orthodox Calvinistic Congregationalists, the Dutch Reformed, and the Secession churches. And the recognized meaning of the intercourse was this: *it testified to a special harmony of doctrine and ecclesiastical principles between that church and ours.* It was a badge of virtual unity of principle. Thus, for instance, when the New School Assembly seceded in 1838, our Old School Assembly, while recognizing her valid church character and all the duties of fraternal charity toward her and her people, absolutely refused to keep up this special intercourse by delegates with her. To do so would have traversed our righteous and obligatory testimony against the partial errors of New Schoolism. It would have been a criminal self-contradiction, or else betrayal of the position of truth in debate between us and them. So now. This special intercourse by delegates if not deceitful and dishonest, should mean virtual unity of principles.

But the Northern church chose to destroy that unity, both in doctrine and church order. By the Spring resolutions of 1861, she saw fit to introduce into her church government a principle of spiritual despotism essentially popish—the invasion of the right of members to follow their own consciences in questions wholly extra-scriptural and merely political. (Thus defined by Dr. Hodge himself). This was dreadfully aggravated by the circumstances, which showed it an attempt to pervert the sacred powers of Christ's church for dragooning free citizens into the support of what history will stigmatize as an aggressive, revolutionary, partisan faction, with the most lawless and mischievous aims. This popish element of church order was signalized, moreover, by such mournful events as the persecution of the sainted McPheeters; the virtual sanction of the invasion of their own St. Louis Presbytery by a provost marshal; the *ipso facto* orders, this invasion of the rights of the Kentucky Synod. And the fundamental departure from Presbyterianism is jealously retained and asserted by them to-day, as we shall see.

Next came the corrupting of their doctrinal record, by their fusion with the New School. The amount of this mixture was, that the Westminster standards, while held as the symbols of the amalgamated body, might be so explained in it as they had been actually explained in either body. The meaning of this is, that any New Schoolism, which was countenanced or permitted in

the New School body, should be entitled to tolerance in the mixed body. So Dr. Hatfield construed it at once, and the Fusion-Assembly at once endorsed him by making him one of its most important officers. This has made the mixed church *responsible for all the doctrinal errors* for which our wise fathers of 1838 separated themselves from the other branch, and for which they inexorably refused the special recognition of correspondence by delegates for thirty years. So that I now stand precisely where the Old School fathers—Miller, Alexander, Baxter, Hodge, Breckinridge, Plumer, Thornwell—stood on this matter. It was of this surrender of doctrinal purity that Dr. Hodge said, “If the truth be lost, all is lost.” “But,” one will say, “Dr. Hodge stayed with them!” Yes; inconsistently he did; he felt he had nowhere else to go. But we are in possession of a precious and blessed independence, given by the special favor of Providence. We *have* somewhere else to *stay* than in this “broad church.” Does any one dream that Dr. Hodge would have left such a position as ours to go into a mixed body of which he intimated that, in losing pure truth, she had lost all?

But, it is said, this mixed church has become marvelously Old School and orthodox. See how it disciplined Prof. Swing, and Dr. John Miller, and Mr. F. Moore, etc., etc.! True; because these bold, candid men compelled the result, by attacking propositions held as fundamental to their theology by New School men as by Old School men. That means nothing. Is there a Presbytery in that mixed church which will dare to do what a Presbytery in the Southern church (Columbia Presbytery) has just done—mark the *New School theory* of effectual calling with judicial censure? They would as soon blow up their Assembly hall with dynamite! When I see pronounced New School men professors in their seminaries; when I see a known Socinian lecturing on doctrine by the invitation of another; when I hear the prevalence of merely negative preaching in their churches, I cannot stultify myself by according them orthodoxy. No! their body exists by the tolerance of doctrinal errors, which our fathers could not tolerate. Hence, it cannot be righteous for us, under a pretext of fraternity, to make that special recognition of them which, if it means anything historically, means, we avouch, *unity of doctrinal* and ecclesiastical principle.

INIQUITOUS LEGISLATION.

Once more. Their assemblies—not individuals only—formally legislated against us libels, than which none more extreme, malicious and unfounded were ever uttered against Christians innocent of them; of rebellion and treason against our most honored members; and of heresy, schism and blasphemy against our church itself.

“Oh! but these are virtually matters of the past,” it is said. “The Northern church does not now believe any of these libels, nor hold these tyrannical principles in earnest. They were the incidents of a time of intense excitement—excitement which made us Southern men say pretty hot things too.” And when we reply, “Then let them simply withdraw and disclaim,” the answer is: “Oh! it isn’t Christian and generous to insist so stubbornly on their openly eating their humble pie; since we know that in their hearts these violences are disclaimed, we should not stickle.”

To this I reply: there is no man who would more cordially assent to this than I would, if there were a word of truth in it. Were there any secret sorrow for the libels, or rectification of the unpresbyterian theory of church power, no one would be further from stickling for a mere form of *amende*. But while there may be, as we hope, a great softening of anger, *there is no change of theory and tyrannical principle*. And this is the saddest part of the history—the one most solemnly necessitating our continued testimony against their error of principle, that now, seventeen years after the end of the war, now, amidst the calmness of assuaged passion, this powerful church stands to its obnoxious principles more unanimously than in May, 1861, when these principles compelled our separation. This I prove, 1, By their cautious, tenacious refusal of any disavowal, when pointed to it. 2, By their embodying in their own Church Digest, as a rule, of the popish and tyrannical decision of the United States Supreme Court in the famous Walnut Street Church case. The amount of this decision was, that all lay Christians shall, like lay papists in popish countries, hold their rights in ecclesiastical property at the mere will of a usurping ecclesiastical head authority, without any appeal to the courts of justice in their country. This ruling, so essentially popish that the very civil courts of the country have refused to conform

to it, the Northern Assembly greedily embodied it, and it *stands to-day* as their church-law. 3. Their recent Assembly at Springfield *unanimously declared*, that the usurping principles of the Spring resolutions, and their successors, must stand. The usurping Assembly of 1861, whose action necessitated our protest, lacked sixty-six of being unanimous. Here, now, are the plain, stubborn facts. Let no man attempt to pooh! pooh! them away. It is little short of moral obliquity to do this. Do we ourselves *adopt* the *tyrannies*, the virtual union of church and state, enacted in the Spring resolutions? Do we now approve them? Or have we become simply fatigued with the duty of defending God's truth and the church's rights? There is no other explanation. Let no one say, "Oh! this is raking up an antiquated dead issue." The Springfield Assembly unanimously assures us of their purpose to keep it alive! Let no one say: "Oh! but the Confederacy is dead, and this doctrine, though tyrannical, can never again have a practical application." I reply, first, who knows whether it cannot, except the Omniscient? All church history teaches us that it is not for man to say, "This truth of God, henceforth, has no more practical use." It is profane; the church's only duty is to testify, and keep on testifying, for all the truth God has given her.

But, again, there is no truth more likely to have a burning application again—not probably in the south, but in some other part of the United States—at an early day, than the truth overthrown by the Spring resolutions. He is a shallow man indeed who deludes himself with the thought, that political revolutions are completed and settled here, when everything shows that we have but passed the first act of the tragedy; that in seventeen years two Presidents have been violently murdered in time of peace; one forcible *coup d'état* has been carried through, setting aside the elective will of the nation; chronic corruptions of suffrage and administration exist all the time, absolutely inconsistent with settled, constitutional government. Why, a revolution is liable to blaze out any day, and, then, the true conservatives who wish to stand by the constitution are liable at once to be coerced by another General Assembly, which shall again choose to assume that the new usurper is "the power of God to us for good." For instance, at the late *coup d'état* alluded to, Northwestern (not Southern) Democrats were within a hair's

breadth of asserting their right to uphold the people's election against force. Suppose they had done so? Then the General Assembly of the day would, we presume, have declared, in their infallibility, that for free citizens of sovereign States to resist the *coup d'état*, though in defence of the people's rights in a legal election, was the "wicked rebellion" prohibited by the apostles. And, then, the Northwestern Presbyterians would have been compelled, like us, to preserve their rights, and we should have had a third Presbyterian Assembly, and a third division; and the fiery contributions of bitterness, hate, and bloodshed made again, by Christ's usurping church, to another unfortunate civil war. And all this the country actually "grazed" six years ago; missing it by a hair's breadth! A dead issue? It is the most living issue that exists, and the most pregnant with mischief and woe, and the loss of the spiritual liberty of Americans.

I sum up my position, then, as being exactly what the position of the Old School fathers, Alexander, Miller, Plumer, *et al.*, was from 1838 and onward; *except*, that where they had one valid and imperative reason for declining this special correspondence by delegates I have three. I have, first, the same ground of doctrinal discrepancy they had, viz.: the connivance at New Schoolism. I have, second, the departure of the Northern Assembly from spiritual liberty by the popish usurpation of the Spring resolutions and their sequels, which I have shown to be of the gravest and most fundamental character. I have, third, a fearful indictment of rebellion and treason, unjustly hurled at our Assembly. And now, let it be noted, that this reasoning disconnects itself wholly from the rise and fall of the late Confederacy and all its interests and passions. It was the rise of the Confederacy—with which our church, as a church, had nothing to do—which was made the occasion and pretext of the usurpation of spiritual power by the Northern Assembly. That was all. Whether the Confederacy was a good or a bad thing, it does not here concern us to argue. It was an earthly institution, with only secular interests and concerns. It is with the spiritual rights of Christ's people in his spiritual kingdom that we here have to do. It is the invasion of them we have to resist conscientiously. This duty has no connection with the institution, whose rise happened to be the mere pretext and circumstance of the usurpation.

USURPATION MAINTAINED.

It has been argued by our recent innovators: "We find the sentiment of our church has correctly settled down on this position: that, when once the obloquies thrown at us have been withdrawn, differences of doctrinal and ecclesiastical *principles*, conscientiously held by the Northern church, ought to be no bar to the resumption of these closer and more special relations by interchange of delegates." This is supposed to be very clear, Christian and conclusive. I assert that it is utterly erroneous and illogical. The fact that the erroneous principles against which we conscientiously feel compelled to testify *are sincerely held* by the other party, is *the very reason for refusing*, instead of granting, this special intercourse. If his assertion of them were a mere whiff of petulance, this would render the assertion of them comparatively trivial; we could the better tolerate it. But it is because this powerful church does seriously, earnestly, conscientiously (with misguided conscience), calmly, assert these grave departures from Presbyterianism as we devoutly hold it; it is for this very reason the case assumes the gravity, solemnly necessitating our denominational protest and testimony. That is the common sense of it. And this is *confirmed by the whole historical attitude of the Old School church*. Thus, with the German Reformed, the Lutheran, the Moravian, the Protestant Episcopal, the Methodist, the Immersionist branches of the visible church catholic, our Assemblies always maintained fraternal relations; but they never did, and never would have maintained with them that special intercourse by annual delegates which they kept up with, for instance, the Dutch Reformed Church. Now, did we decline this interchange with the great Methodist churches, for instance, because we held that *they were not sincere* in holding that modified Arminianism which separated them partially from us? What an infinite absurdity is this? Did we thus statedly insult our Methodist brethren with the innuendo, that *their* honest doctrinal testimony was a pretence? No; it was because we knew that their modified Arminianism was, and is, honestly held by them, with all the sincerity of a pious—though, as we believe, erroneous—conviction; it was for *this very reason* we felt, and now feel, bound to keep up our testimony by withholding from them this special intercourse. And they understand this. And they honor

us for it. And they are too much Christian gentlemen to be guilty of teasing and worrying our Assemblies to enter into a special intercourse which would express a falsehood, in symbolizing a doctrinal unity which both parties know has no existence. But is this any rupture of real fraternal relations between us and the Methodist brethren? None whatever. We bear our testimony in this mild, forbearing form. They bear theirs against what they, with equal honesty, believe to be our hyper-Calvinism. But on all other points we are brethren; and we can press our congregational enterprises side by side, in the same towns and neighborhoods, without strife, each doing good in our own way. Why cannot Northern Presbyterians, near or among us, if they still feel bound in conscience to maintain their anti-Presbyterian principles on these grave and momentous points dividing us, behave in the same way, and let us alone? That would be good manners. In a word, *they have chosen*, they say conscientiously, *to disrupt and destroy that unity of doctrine and order of which the interchange of delegates is the emblem*. Then we can't help it; only we have our duty to perform as a witnessing church, which we propose to do in the mildest form possible. To destroy the unity by their own deliberate action, and then ask the badge of it, is neither good manners nor morals.

Another argument for changing the righteous attitude of our Assemblies has struck me with astonishment. It is in substance, "that the old men who were actors in the separation of 1861 are nearly all dead and gone; that the new men who will soon govern the church were not actors in that division; and, therefore, it is time, or will soon be time, to drop the old testimony." I ask myself, What absurdity is this I hear? Does truth grow old? Do vital principles become antiquated? If these men would come out and say out aloud, that the popery of the Spring resolutions, the semi-pelagianism of New Haven theology, the legislated slander of an innocent church, are all sound Presbyterianism; that the men of 1861 were wrong in testifying against these vital departures, then I could understand. But when our opponents assure us unanimously that their church asserts two out of these three departures to-day, just as before, I see not what on earth the coming of a new and the going of an old generation of the friends of truth have to do with the

cessation of our testimony. I thought that God's Word promised, "In place of the fathers shall be the children;" that the performance of the interesting duty was a part of the sacred inheritance of believers, until God is pleased to terminate the witness-bearing by converting the errorists. According to this notable argument, as soon as Luther and Calvin, on one side, and Eck and Leo X., on the other, were dead, the Protestants and Papists ought to have gone into "fraternal relations." As soon as John Wesley on the one side, and Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon on the other, were dead, all the Evangelicals in England ought to have flowed together and declared that Arminianism and Calvinism came to the same thing. The truths at issue were Whitefield's truths, forsooth, instead of God's truths! Equally absurd is the argument now.

THE ASSEMBLY OF 1875.

My next remark is, that our Assembly is now realizing the bad consequences of its erroneous position assumed in 1875. It then, under the guidance of its commissioners to the Baltimore Conference, compromised the two stronger thirds of its basis of action, when it declared that the errors of doctrine and order perpetuated by the Spring resolutions and their sequels, and by the unguarded recognition of New Haven theology, should be no barrier to the resumption of the more intimate relations, but only the unretracted libel on our church. The sophistical argument for this unfortunate position was as follows: that for any betrayal of the principles of Christ's kingdom the Northern church was not responsible to us, but only to Christ; that they were responsible to us only for their libel of us; that hence, if they would only withdraw that, it was no business of ours to deal with them about the other defections.

But it is the simplest solution in the world, that this is the true statement: "Both Northern and Southern churches are responsible, in all things, to *Christ their Lord*, and not to each other; we, as a witnessing church, are responsible to Christ for bearing our testimony, in appropriate ways, against all error; just as they are responsible to him, not to us, for teaching any error." The argument I criticise is refuted by every usage and act of the older and sounder Assemblies. Why did they always withhold correspondence by delegates from the Lutheran, the

Methodist, the Immersionist churches? Because they had libelled the Assembly? Not at all. But because they marred, in some particulars, Christ's truth. Again, the position of our Assembly in 1875 had an aspect of great unseemliness about it. It seemed to say, that we cared much about our personal repute and little about the honor and principles of Christ's kingdom and the spiritual liberty of his children. We said to the assailants of Christ's rights, we will condone all that, without any reparation or rectification at all, provided you will restore our personal good name. This was unseemly and unfaithful to our Master. We are now reaping the deserved chastisement in the pitiable entanglements of the hour. For once more, we ought to have foreseen that, by waiving our two clearer and more disinterested bases of action, we were exposing ourselves to be entrapped at any time by a partial or deceitful withdrawal of personal obloquies. I warned my brethren, from my obscure position, of these dangers, but nobody listened to the warning. Our church might have been solidly placed like a man on a good three-legged stool; our Assembly of 1875 saw fit to throw away two of the legs, and leave the church in an unstable equilibrium, like a man attempting to poise himself on one leg; just as I foresaw, this subsequent Assembly, acting on this partial, sophistical basis, has met this cruel embarrassment. It finds itself seemingly committed, pledged in advance, to accept any sort of *amende* for the personal obloquies that professes to be sincere, and to restore the special intercourse by delegates. But yet the personal obloquies are, and always were, so logically related to the ecclesiastical usurpations of principle that the two must inevitably go together. If the Spring resolutions are Presbyterianism, then General T. J. Jackson and I *are* rebels. The two are inseparable, premise and conclusion. Hence it was always a logical solecism for our Assembly of 1875 to say: The Northern Assembly may hold the former, if she will disclaim the latter, and we are satisfied. She cannot hold the former and disclaim the latter without falsehood. Thus our Assembly prepared for itself the pitfall in which it is now writhing; pledging itself to accept an *amende* which was *necessitated to be deceitful* as an *amende*. Thus the way was prepared for all the tortuous involutions of the "concurrent" and the "explanatory" resolutions. We are taught by this experience

that we should have stood squarely on the three bases, where the Assembly of 1870 placed our church. It was, in substance, this: no injuries of our persons, however real, justify in us any retaliation or revenge. That is all out of the debate. We, of course, extend fraternal relations to all branches of the church which can be recognized as *valid* branches of Christ's catholic, visible church. As such we hold the Northern Presbyterian Church; for though we are sorrowfully necessitated to regard it as an erring, we do not hold it as an apostate church. But as to this special correspondence by delegates, historically expressive of substantial unity of principle, we cannot go into it, *for three reasons*; of which the two foremost and more weighty ones are, that the church has admitted some serious doctrinal license, and has invaded the spiritual liberty of Christ's people in a vital point; and the third, less cardinal, but still sufficient reason, is, that she has formally slandered the good name of our church, which it is our duty and right to defend—at least by this the mildest form of protest. That was the sound, consistent, Christian position where the Assembly of 1870, through the able hand of Dr. Palmer, placed our church. Well would it have been for her had she stayed there, until God's Spirit and providence had blessed her testimony, as the means of teaching all American Presbyterians to come sincerely back to the right. That was the mission given her by the orderings of Providence and the Word of God.

WHAT IT MEANS.

And this leads us to the well-known manner of the *amende*, wherein the Northern Assembly first agreed to call itself a slanderer—which it had been—on condition we would call ourselves hypothetically slanderers—which she and we knew we had not been. And this avowal, thus purchased, was then modified by an "explanation" which did not "modify;" that whereas five separate charges—disloyalty, treason, schism, heresy, blasphemy, had been first laid against us, the *amende* shall extend to the last three, but shall not extend to the first two! Now, there are sundry unhandsome traits of this action, which, were our people clear-eyed, would render it entirely nugatory. *First*, It was to be "concurrent action," saying the same thing for us, *mutatis mutandis*, which we had said for them. But *our Assembly had appended no pendant*. *Second*, This Assembly made official

communication only of the first resolution, which, without its fatal pendant, sounded satisfactory ; thus leaving our Assembly, so far as they went, ignorant of what followed, and liable to act generously, and adjourn in ignorance of what they had really done and really pledged to us. It was to the chance action of a person, action unofficial and unauthorized, that our escape from that trap was due. *Third*, In withdrawing the withdrawal they really left the grievance of the unrestricted libel substantially unmitigated. It will be said, the charge of "blasphemy," for instance, is and remains squarely retracted. Yes ; but that was a part of their railing which never did mean anything—which nobody believed to be true when uttered—which always was harmless to our reputation. Everybody knew that it was the mere foam on the angry lip. It was the charges of rebellion and treason—which had meaning and practicality in them—which really had (false) power to shade our good name—which endangered our necks and our estates, and our franchises ; which those Assemblies "explained without modifying," by the amiable recommendation to the Federal government to hang us. And it is these charges, which we are now informed, in the good year 1882, are not withdrawn ! Let us state a little parallel. My Christian neighbor gets angry with me, and publishes two charges on me : one, that I, being an officer of that institution, had embezzled a trust fund belonging to Union Seminary ; the other that I had, witch-like, ridden to Presbytery on a broomstick above the moon. I have been for years dealing with him precisely as our Saviour directs in Matt. xviii., but he has always refused any *amende*. At last he sends word that he is ready to join me in a general, square *retraxit* and reconciliation. After I have honestly shaken hands on this, he says, by way of "explanation without modification," "Now mind, my *retraxit* is to be understood as extending only to that tale about the broomstick." Well, this practically ruins it all ; for the charge left against me was the damaging, and the only damaging one. Unfortunately it has not been found impossible for a parson to embezzle trust funds, and the charge that I had done so is not intrinsically incredible, apart from my known reputation. But the charge of riding on a broomstick nobody had ever credited ; it had always gone for nothing and been understood as meaning nothing more than that my neighbor was "blind-mad" when he

said it. In just such a state this Springfield action leaves us: the charges of heresy and blasphemy never were nor could be credited. The men who made the charges were all along concurring with the rest of the Presbyterian world, to which they made them, in saying, that "Southern Presbyterians are well known to be the most conservative doctrinally, and most exemplary and strict, of the Presbyterian family of churches." But it was their representation of us as rebellious, insubordinate factions which had power of damaging our good name. It is these which are, expressly, *not withdrawn*. *Fourth*, The saddest part of the story is the obvious *motive* which caused the Springfield Assembly to attach the fatal pendant to their *amende*. It was very clear that the motive was secular and political; the fear to offend the political sentiments of their constituents at home by even seeming to surrender or modify the tyrannical and popish principle of the Spring resolutions. And now the *New York Observer* tells the plain truth, though by the use of those euphemisms which the *Observer* so well understands. In plain English, that Assembly passed the "Herrick Johnson resolution" because it believed that the home people of their church still hold that deadly usurpation so passionately as to be indignant with even a seeming relaxation of it, even to gain the coveted reconciliation. And that Assembly passed it *unanimously!* This tells the sad story—that politics still rule in that church; that really the breach of principle is not healed at all; that the very central error which disrupted the church at first is still unanimously held in that Assembly; that the same reason exists for our maintaining our conscientious testimony, and our ecclesiastical independence. Well, it is sorrowful; but it is not our fault. The last way in the world to remedy this state of things is for us to waver in our right position, and thus sophisticate and mix the truth with the error.

Mr. Calhoun once said to a brother senator, when the Senate was proposing to act on a statement made known only by a dispatch, "Never act on a mere telegram; it gives only the central fact, without any background by which to construe it." Well would it have been for our Assembly if it had observed this wise caution! The unhealthy *animus* which prevailed in the Assembly is betrayed by the fact that it did so unhesitatingly take this critical action on a short telegram!

Much has been said of the marvelous unanimity of the Assembly. If we may believe the statements we hear, the real amount of this unanimity was, that the members *were*, indeed, nearly unanimous in the conviction that they were hopelessly entangled in their own indiscretions, and so saw no way to help themselves. But very few seem to be really *satisfied with the result*.

THE PECUNIARY QUESTION.

We are told that much was also said about the necessity of our conciliating the help of Northern Presbyterians, to overtake the work of meeting the incoming immigration into the South with our Presbyterian gospel. Glowing references were made to the influx into Texas, the mushroom growth of mining and manufacturing towns in the South, and to the prospect of a larger influx in the near future. Then, it was exclaimed, that here was a huge work for our weak, poor, Southern church to do; that it was *utterly Utopian, hopeless, impossible*, for her to do it unaided; that she must gain the help of Northern Presbyterianism, in men and money, or make a disastrous failure in the task; and that, in order to get these, we must establish these intimate relations. One writer exclaims: "We have but one seminary open, with forty-five students and eleven or twelve licentiates for the year. It is simply out of the question for us to do it unaided."

Let us look intelligently at this. If Presbyterianism is to be built up in our fields with Northern resources, the first question to be asked is, Which Presbyterianism? Do we ask our "Northern brethren" to give all this money, and these men to build up the Presbyterianism which they persistently and conscientiously denounce as rebellious and treasonable (now no longer blasphemous)? They are a shrewd generation. This it seems is the hope, that the "miller will turn the water off his own mill-wheel." The emptiness of that hope is sufficiently obvious, and, indeed, the impertinence of our pressing it. "Good Brother, Northern Miller! our wheel grinds for a different concern from you; our aim is to get all the grist in this part of the neighborhood away from your mill. So, good brother, turn your water off your mill-wheel on ours!"

But again, this plan of engaging the Northern help professes to approach that church in the equitable and loving, instead of

the rival spirit. Then it is impertinent and unfraternal, in demanding of them that they shall do all their own work and a part of ours; while, in fact, *we are better able to do all of ours than they are to do all theirs*. We are indulging a lazy hallucination here, unjust to them, degrading to ourselves. We have talked about the impoverished South and the "great and rich North" until we are blind to plain facts. The Northern church is more powerful than ours, in number of ministers, churches and communicants, and in wealth—perhaps five or six times more powerful. But she has *far more than four times the influx of new population to evangelize on her hands*. Has she not eight times as much? If she, with sixfold strength, is able to do her sixfold—or eightfold—work, why cannot we, with our smaller strength, do our smaller work? If she is not able, then, in calling her to do ours, we are causing her to neglect her own, which is a sin. This is the healthy view to take of our duty, *to imitate the energy* of the Northern church, if indeed she does overtake her vast work; and not to seek, in this lazy, cowardly way, to divert her resources from the places they are so needed, to supplement our stinginess and laziness. The singing of this song is the sure way to emasculate our church. Experience has also proved, as I shall show, that just in proportion to our independence of Northern help and control has been the fruitfulness of our church in doing its own work. We are in danger of cheating ourselves into a criminal apathy, by thus talking as if the North had everything and we were helpless beggars. Here are two sons, one four times as large and strong as the other. The father has given the small one, because he is small, twenty pounds to carry. But he has also given the other *more than one hundred and twenty pounds*. And now the little fellow cries that he is so little he cannot carry his twenty pounds, but must have his big brother to "tote" for him, "because he is so big." What he needs is a sharp taste of the birch, to make him do his work and stop whining. For shame! Let the Southern church reopen her seminaries, and give her sons to the ministry, and give the money for her Home Missions. She is more able to do it this day than the Northern church is to do all the larger work God lays on her hands.

In this connection, it is instructive to note how this paralysis of our own resources and lagging behind our own tasks synchro-

nizes with this relaxation of the spirit of honest independence in our church. When was it that the promising impulse and progress of our work received its first check? Precisely at the time when we began to "let down" our testimony, to tamper with entangling "alliances," and to "bill and coo" with our unrelenting accusers. It is precisely since then that our number of candidates began to decline, and the expansion of our tasks to outgrow our energies. What else would any one expect who understands human nature? To cry, "Oh, we *can't* do it;" "Oh! the work is too large for us;" "Oh! we must have Northern help!"—this is the sure way to drug the consciences of our own people, and to enervate their Christianity, by encouraging them to lean on other people's crutches.

FUSION.

One more topic remains: the *tendency* of this special intercourse to undermine the very existence of our church, and prepare the way for a fusion with the Northern Presbyterians. Some (as Dr. Brown) exclaim that this apprehension is visionary; he does not know of even a "scouting-party" in favor of it. Others cry, "Sh—sh! The subject is too ticklish to handle. The very way to precipitate fusion is to talk about it." Now, I reply: is the loyalty of our ministers to their own church, is its independence and existence, thus precarious? Then is this head of my argument more fearfully true than any, even the most apprehensive, had argued! But I mean to speak, on this head, the words of truth and soberness; *the truth* can never be mischievous.

First, Our late accusers, now comrades, all cry, with confidence, that a long step toward fusion has been taken; that the last step is now near and easy. See the *Interior*, *New York Observer*, etc., etc. They are shrewd people; they are "cute."

Second, They make no bones of saying "out aloud" that they intend to use this new intercourse diligently and solely as a means to bring about fusion. When Dr. Brown says, "No! it is merely the establishment of decent, pacific relations between two churches, which are, and are to remain, independent," our "Northern brethren" utterly flout and flee this. They snap their fingers at him. They assure him that they will show him the other result, and that very soon. Now, I do not remark on

the manners or morals of this declaration. I merely ask, what is the infatuation, in view of the known pertinacity of these people, of our establishing this intercourse, of our opening to them this door, unless we desire and design fusion? I had, let us suppose, a neighbor, whose character I never considered safe. He has been teasing me for a social access to my family, to which he is not entitled. He has kept up a complaint that I am a bad neighbor in this matter. At last I give way weakly, and establish the social interchanges, as I say, "solely to show good neighborhood; nothing more, Oh no!" Yet I know that the fellow habitually and openly boasts of his purpose to marry my chaste, innocent daughter; declares to his boon-companions that this is his sole end in demanding social relations with my family; and that he designs to use them for this alone! And yet, knowing all this, I give him the chances he desires. And, by way of explanation, I publish to my neighbors this resolve of myself and family: "*Resolved*, That Blank is not to be allowed, in any event, to marry our daughter." Certain it is, my neighbors would only judge me in my dotage.

Third, This intercourse may, honestly, not have been intended to lead to such fusion; and yet its logical result is fusion. So the Northern papers have already expounded it. I have shown that the historical usage and meaning of correspondence of delegates is a recognition of *virtual unity* of doctrinal and ecclesiastical principles. If this unity does not exist, the intercourse is dishonest. If it does, why not fuse? That is their argument. Grant the premise, and the inference will tell, even on reluctant minds. It is the premise which is erroneous and perilous, and should not have been granted.

RESULTS OF FUSION.

Thus this matter derives its gravity, not from its intrinsic importance, but from its tendencies and consequences. In itself it would be trivial, and would merit little discussion. If this interchange of delegates was what Dr. Brown understands it to be, only "for the nonce," to be followed by no usage, to be done as an end of debate, and not repeated, then it would remain trivial, and I should not have troubled the church with any caution. But knowing perfectly well that Dr. Brown is "reckoning without his host" in this thing, that the Northern Presbyterians,

and his own brethren, who have pressed him to this acquiescence, mean it otherwise, I am bound to utter that caution. I must, then, beg every thoughtful friend of Christ's cause and truth, and of the salvation of souls in the Southern half of the United States, to pause, and remember what fusion would mean.

It means, then, in the first place, the *division* of our once happy and harmonious church. For, let every man rest assured, that there will be a large body of our eldership and membership, clear-eyed, self-respecting, loyal to Old School Presbyterianism, immovable, who *are never going to be traded off* to the corrupters of American Presbyterianism and slanderers of their fathers' virtues. [And this suggests the crowning argument against this Atlanta movement; that, under pretence of ending contention with the errorists—whom it is our duty to contend with—it makes strife with our own brethren, with whom we should be at one as we profess.]

It means the unobstructed triumph, among American Presbyterians, of the virtually popish and tyrannical principle of the Spring resolutions, and consequent usurpations, with the mischievous and inflaming applications it is likely to receive in future political collisions.

It means that we surrender our tenure in all our church-property to that new, popish rule, devised by a radical Supreme Court, and greedily embodied in the Digest of the church.

It means that we acquiesce in becoming doctrinally a "Broad Church," to the extent of tolerating, in the same communion, both the extremes of strict Calvinism and New Havenism, to such extent as the two "branches" of the Northern church tolerated either, between 1838 and 1869.

It means that we surrender our new Book of Church Order, with all its improvements, and go back to the old book which we had so resolutely discarded.

It means that we surrender our well-considered committee system of evangelism, and go back to that old board-system, which Dr. Thornwell refuted in 1860 at the Rochester Assembly.

It means that we admit a "rotary eldership," thus surrendering our scriptural doctrine of the qualification and call of the ruling elder by the Holy Ghost, and his true ordination by his Presbytery, and placing ourselves at this half-way house of Congregationalism.

It means the immediate collapse of our seminaries and evangelistic agencies, under the alien management of a great *omnibus* church ; so that, in place of the \$75,000 for Foreign Missions, and \$58,000 for Home Missions, etc., which we gave last year to these enterprises, in the trusted and beloved hands of Drs. Wilson and McIlwaine, we should give the year after the fusion, to the mistrusted, alien, abolitionized, sectional agencies in New York, about \$20,000 and \$15,000 respectively, with a tendency towards a farther annual decline. In 1860 the Presbyteries now enrolled in the Southern church are credited by the Assembly's Minutes as having contributed to Domestic Missions \$48,264, and to Foreign Missions, \$39,348. In comparing these amounts with the present contributions to these objects, two things must be remembered. One, that the Southern churches, now generally poor, yet contributing \$75,000 to Foreign Missions, were then exceedingly rich. The other is, that many churches, as in Kentucky, East Tennessee, etc., then connected with the South, are now Northern Presbyterian. These figures illustrate the progress made by the Southern church in virtue of its independence.

It means, of course, that we must imitate the church which absorbs us, in the ecclesiastical amalgamation with negroes ; accepting negro presbyters to rule white churches and judge white ladies ; a step which would seal the moral and doctrinal corruption of our church in the South, and be a direct step towards that final perdition of Southern society, domestic amalgamation. And the time would come in the South—yea, in the North also, as it found itself encumbered with this gangrened limb—a mulatto South, when all who had lent a hand, under the prompting of a puling sentimentalism, to this result, would incur the reprobation of all the wise and good, in terms as just, and as bitter, as those visited on Benedict Arnold.

For, let any man look on the negro character calmly, and he will see that the introduction of any, the smallest, element of negro rule into our church, *means moral and doctrinal relaxation*, and ecclesiastical corruption, poisoning the life-blood of our churches, just in degree as it is extended. The sentimentalist may exclaim ; Why cannot a negro be converted ? Cannot a negro become learned ? Yes ; possibly he may ; but, if converted, *he will not be perfect* ; and as sure as nature, one of

his remaining imperfections will be his race feelings. Sentimentalists may shout that "Christianity knows no castes;" that "all caste-distinctions are unchristian"—which I here denounce as scripturally and historically false—but whether we will or not, the negro is going to keep himself a caste, as to Southern Presbyterians. And in every issue where the rival and opponent of white Southern Presbyterianism is going to attack principles dear to us, the negro is going to side with that assailant. Witness the fact that, in all secular issues, he infallibly sides with the assailant of all vital Southern interests, even when the negro is thereby hurting his own interest. And this he does, usually, with a regularity exactly proportioned to his professed "culture." Once more, negro Christianity may foster in them personal virtues in individual actions; but I observe that never yet has negro religion elevated the best of them to that stage of conscience so vital for a ruler in a free, constitutional, spiritual commonwealth like our church, which *prevents wrong-doing in associated actions*, where the responsibility is veiled by forms of law and combination of many agents. I know some very good Christians among them—sincerely devout, prayerful, diligent, chaste, charitable, educated, intelligent, wholly above individual larceny. But I have invariably seen the best of these, as partisans, concur actively, without qualm of conscience, in the foulest and most putrescent party actions by which the South has been disgraced. Such is the average, Christianized intelligence and conscience of that race at this time. Merge our churches with the North, and *at once* we poison the noble Synods of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia with the infusion of the black "Synod of Atlantic;" with the prospect of the similar corruption of our whole Southern church.

Once more, fusion with the North would mean our betrayal of our righteous testimony against the rationalistic and skeptical features of modern abolitionism—a testimony which is now faithfully sustained by our church alone in Protestant Christendom. This abolitionism the Holy Spirit has expressly condemned in 1 Timothy vi. 1-5, characterizing it in the sternest language as arrogant, perverse, mercenary, slanderous and false; and he has *expressly legislated*, "From such withdraw thyself." Many, if not the majority, in that Assembly defiantly profess that abolitionism; and the only legislation the Assembly itself has taken

about them was *to denounce us* for protesting against it as Paul required us, as "heretics and blasphemers." So that such fusion would be a flying in the face of God's express command.

A SUGGESTION.

What plan, then, do I propose? I say, first, *Hold fast to our independence*, as our sheet-anchor from ecclesiastical shipwreck. And, to this end, repudiate *every* entangling alliance that endangers that independence. Next, let Dr. Brown, as he has been appointed to go, go to the next Northern Assembly. But let him first stop at our Assembly in Lexington, and fortify himself with strong instructions. And let these instructions be such as these: that he is to say to the Northern Assembly, "I am here according to the agreement of 1882, *NOT to establish* that intimate annual intercourse by delegates, which historically signifies a unity of principles which you have yourselves disrupted, but to signify, what has been true ever since 1865, that there is an end of strife between us, except as you make it; that we have no revenges; that we recognize you as a church of Christ; that as such we wish to observe fraternal relations; *which are*, the exercise of Christian charities, the interchange of ministerial and Christian communion, and the recognition of your church order. That this declaration made for the nonce suffices, and will not be followed by annual delegates." Dr. Brown might also very well intimate to them that we perceive the crookedness of their Springfield action; but that, desiring to give the above testimony, we have chosen, in a spirit of magnanimity, to pass it by for this time. *But by no means let Dr. Brown ask for an explanation of their explanation.* The only result of this would be confusion twice confounded. For these skilled adepts at the art of "explaining without modifying," retracting and then taking back their *retraxit*, would be sure to find words which would plunge Dr. Brown and us into a perplexity worse even than his present. No, we have had enough of that; we have been badly enough bitten; we had better not try to find out whether the animal meant to bite, by putting our hand into his mouth again.

Then, for the rest, we should go on our way, minding our own business. We should observe precisely the same relations we do towards the Southern Methodists or Lutherans. If any

Northern Presbyterian ministers or elders wish to come to us, who personally hold that sound position held by Dr. Charles Hodge as to the usurpations of their Assemblies, and as to New School defects of doctrine, we should receive them, though in their secular opinions anti-Confederates like Dr. Hodge. If their laity choose to come to us, even uninstructed and blinded as to these defects of Northern Presbyterianism, we should charitably receive them, provided they will coöperate peaceably; just as we would receive a layman with Arminian opinions, under the apostolic rule: "Them that are *weak in the faith* receive ye;" hoping to win them to our truer Presbyterianism. If some, ministers or laymen, who are *ex animo* dissentients from our truer Presbyterianism, go about organizing churches on Southern soil, of their faith, let them do it. The responsibility is theirs. We have no more mission, as true Presbyterians, to prevent it than we have to prevent semi-Arminians from organizing Methodist churches beside ours. We are sorry they do not see and teach the whole truth. But it is no business of ours to prevent their proceedings. That belongs to God.

Thus I have "shown mine opinion." It is only the judgment of one single presbyter, with no right of dictation to his brethren; but it is honest. And I am confident every impartial reader will see that it is logically consistent, scriptural, and therefore safe.

THE PAN-PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE.¹

THE writer once inquired of General R. E. Lee whether it was his purpose to attend the meeting of the Education Association of the Teachers of Virginia. He replied: "If I could see that they were going to effect anything except talk, I might think of attending." This seems, to the plain mind, the most obvious objection to the project of a Pan-Presbyterian Alliance. In order to avoid being dangerous, it finds itself compelled to limit its functions to "talk." Such pious reunions may be as pleasant as Dr. Robinson seems to have found the tentative meeting in London; but if this is all, evidently the churches have more urgent and useful applications to make of their time and money than to these ostentatious and costly prayer meetings.

But are there not more serious difficulties in the way of Southern Presbyterians mingling in these meetings? The writer cannot forget an event, of which present advocates of this Alliance seem strangely oblivious, that advances from us were, at a very recent date, repelled by the very people with whom we are now invited to associate ourselves. Do gentlemen recall the appointment of Drs. Palmer, Girardeau, and Hoge, by the Memphis Assembly, to go abroad as its commissioners, to explain the position of our church to the Presbyterians of Great Britain, and conciliate some moral support in the day of our need and insulation? But these commissioners, fortunately, were so discreet as to write letters of inquiry before they went, whether they would be received in a manner consistent with their self-respect. The answer they received was, *that they would not*. Because they were the representatives of a church which refused to array itself upon an anti-scriptural abolition ground, they were informed that they would not be received as equals; and they at once concluded that respect for themselves and the Assembly absolutely forbade their going. Like sensible men, they

¹ This article appeared in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for January, 1876

stayed at home. Have our brethren also forgotten that the "Evangelical Alliance," so called, also excluded ministers from the American Presbyterian Church, because it had not placed itself upon their abolition platform? But these are the churches on whose fraternal embraces we are now asked to throw ourselves! If the self-respect of Drs. Palmer, Girardeau, and Hoge forbade such an act then, why does it not forbid it now? Which of the parties has changed? Have the Southern Presbyterians at length adopted the infidel abolition creed? Or have the Northern and the European churches forsaken and repented it? It is very well understood that the latter are now more mad on this idol than at any previous time. It is equally well understood that the entrance of our church into their fraternity is permitted only as it is construed as a tacit surrender of our position, and a silent acceptance of theirs. The proof of this is very easy. Let our commissioners simply remind the next Assembly that we still stand immovably upon the position of our Assembly in 1845, and that if they embrace us, it must be on this express understanding. Candor will, indeed, requires no less of us. We shall see a tempest of fanatical excitement, which will effectually estop our entrance. Dr. McCosh is usually regarded as the author of this Pan-Presbyterian movement. Preaching in the Central Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, he said that Southern Christians, once justly excluded from the Evangelical Alliance for slave-holding, might now be admitted, because slavery had been removed by Providence! But has the question been settled? The institution has been unlawfully and violently overthrown. True. Does that remove the question from between honest men? An invitation to us to a fraternity from which we were once excluded for slave-holding, now tendered on this ground, can only mean one of two hypocrisies: either that we shall consent to be construed as forsaking and repenting and confessing acts which we have neither forsaken nor repented, or that Dr. McCosh shall feign satisfaction with sins in us unrepented, which his conscience abhors, because its overt perpetration is prevented by force. At neither of these hypocrisies can we connive. The pickpocket shall be held, forsooth, a very proper gentleman, not because he has repented his thefts, but because there are iron bars between his fingers and other people's pockets, and because he is sufficiently a sneak to be silent

now about his former exploits! If Dr. McCosh is satisfied with such a basis of fraternity, we presume Southern Presbyterians are not. We scarcely think they are ready to be construed into a desertion of the time-honored testimony of their fathers, and into the concession that these holy and venerated men were men-stealers.

But, proceeding in our inquiries, we ask—

1. Whether our representation in this Alliance will not be a step towards a dishonest compromise with the Northern Presbyterian Church? We have charged upon them that, in a critical time, they abandoned their covenanted constitution, and usurped popish powers of perverting the spiritual authority of the church to override the secular rights and liberties of its members; thus assisting to precipitate upon us and our neighbors the horrors of invasion, rapine, bloodshed, and subjugation. We have charged upon them a foul slander of our good name, which has been industriously published to the very churches with which we are asked to ally ourselves. If these charges are erroneous, we cannot too soon retract and repent them. If they are just, then we have done right in requiring the disavowal of the slanders, and a return to the sacred principles of the constitution, before we can, with any respect for truth or for ourselves, enter into fraternal relations with them. They will neither retract the slander, nor repair the disastrous usurpation. Meantime, it is now proposed that we shall meet them abroad, on the very footing on which we refused to meet them at home! If this is not a stultification of our testimony, it is hard to see what would be! We say to their glozing invitations: "No. We can wish you well; we can forbear retaliation; we can render, not railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing; we can endeavor faithfully to exercise all the graces of Christian charity towards those who injure us; but with this slander and this usurpation undressed, duty forbids us to meet you in fraternal correspondence." And then we go incontinently across the water, and *meet them in fraternal correspondence!* When we enter the assemblage of those whom they made the sympathising auditors of their burning slander against us, what do we see? The representatives of the slanderers sitting "in the chief seats of the synagogue," most numerous of any delegation, and most honored.

Let it be noted here, also, that the advocates of this measure among us greatly misrepresent the true position of our church. They now say that the popish usurpation and violation of the constitution committed by the Northern Church would be no just barrier to fraternal correspondence, if they would only retract their slander against us. *This is not what our Assembly of 1870 said.* That Assembly expressly declared that both wrongs must be amended before fraternal correspondence would be possible. It declared that while this fatal usurpation stood unconfessed, we could not break the force of our obligatory and righteous protest against it, by any fraternal correspondence. But now, these brethren would have us recede from half of our stronghold.

Is it not very clear to any plain mind, that this will soon lead to the betrayal of the other half? If we go into the fraternal correspondence across the water with the Northern Presbyterians, with whom we refuse to correspond on this side of it, will not the stultification of ourselves be so complete that the loss of our position must follow? In a few years the absurdity will become irksome to us, and we shall be betrayed into a dishonest compromise and a forsaking of the testimony which Providence has called us to bear. Dr. Girardeau foresaw this, and with his clear, honest, good sense, pointed it out to the last Assembly; but amidst the special pleadings which prevailed, he was unheeded.

But Dr. Robinson does not think that such will be the result. He thinks our position will be rather strengthened by meeting the representatives of our usurpers and slanderers on that common ground. It is hard for a plain man to see how we can strengthen our position by inconsistency, by "blowing hot and cold" on the same parties. He says that if a neighbor in a city has wronged a sensible man of business, he does not exclude himself from the bank or exchange to which his business and his rights lead him, because he meets the injurer there. This illustration presents a false analogy. The scenes to which our business and our duties call us are our own pulpits and charges. These are *our* banks and counting-houses. Well will it be for us if we stick to them. If the slanderer intrudes there, we will *meet and resist* him as we may. The just analogy to our position would be the case where a wealthy host invited us to a social

entertainment, such as a dinner-party, and also invited the man who had injured and slandered us ; to whom we had sent word that honor forbade our social recognition of him until he made amends. Now, could that invitation be accepted by an honorable man ? He would not seek to make a disagreeable parade of the unfortunate quarrel at the table of the host, who probably designed the invitation, however ill-considered, as a kindness. He would not endeavor to implicate the host or the other guests. He would keep his grievance to himself, with dignified quiet. But he would certainly not accept the invitation. He would feel that to accept it would be as senseless an outrage upon the host as upon his own self-respect, for he could not extend social recognition to that slanderer as he met him at the host's table without degrading and stultifying himself, and he could not refuse it without a discourtesy to the host and the other guests. So, if he were a man, he would politely, but firmly, decline the invitation. In the Assembly Dr. Robinson urged that, since we had the true Presbyterianism, we should go to the Pan-Presbyterian Alliance to proclaim it. The answer is, that this was the very place where he could not proclaim it. He found himself in the very position in which the injured citizen of the parable just drawn would have been, had he been so unwise as to accept the invitation to the feast. Dr. Robinson found himself an "invited guest" of European Presbyterianism. He also found present, as invited and especially honored guests, the very men whom our proclamation of our pure Presbyterianism would have assailed and indicted. Consequently his mouth was sealed. It was no place to bear his testimony, because the courtesies of the occasion forbade. *So it will ever be.*

2. It has been argued that, if we stay out of this Alliance, we shall be considered "sore-heads," "sulky," etc. All we can say to this plea is, that it seems to betray an astonishing oblivion of our true position as witnesses for righteous principles ; and that if the argument should ever be verified by any act of the outside Christian world, the sensible Southern Presbyterian will regard it with the contempt due to a low insult. These terms, if they mean anything, suggest the idea of a wrong-headed person, sulking over an imaginary injury, or of a perverse school-boy, who has gotten a part of the drubbing which he deserved, and is still too insubordinate to submit to it. Do those who use this

argument intend to present this as the attitude of the Southern Presbyterian Church? Were our wrongs imaginary? Are we like the insolent boy who has only gotten a part of the drubbing he deserves, and whom the other part, soundly laid on, would probably bring to his good humor? If *this* is their appreciation of the position of the Southern Presbyterian Church, then we think their proper place is not only in the Pan-Presbyterian Alliance, but in the bosom of the radical church. If their estimate of our position were the just one, then the thing we ought to do is to confess our evil temper, and to ask pardon of those who have wronged and slandered us, before we presume to ask admission to the Presbyterian fraternity. To any one who has the head and heart to appreciate the height of the great argument to which God has been pleased to call the Southern church, this charge is unspeakably grovelling. Have these gentlemen no other conception of fidelity to right trampled down by unjust violence, than "sulking?" It is to be presumed that, in their eyes, the "witnesses for the truth" throughout the middle ages were but "sore-heads," because they stood aloof from the corrupt church whose errors they were called by God to oppose! Yea, the apostles were "sore-heads" when they separated themselves from the opposers of God's truth! In a day when truth has fallen in the streets, it becomes her friends to have *sore hearts*, which shall be too full of righteous grief for the wrongs done to her, to truckle and compromise.

3. It has been argued that we must go into this promiscuous Alliance in order to get out of our insulation, in order to be better understood and appreciated by Christians abroad. But suppose it should be that this insulation is the very position assigned us by the Head of the church, in which to perform the high duty laid on us. Then to get out of it is a sin. If he has assigned us a particular testimony, in which other churches will not join us, in respect of which they are misunderstanding and neglecting their duty, then a state of insulation is precisely the one we should occupy. There is something else far more essential than "appreciation" by foreigners, and this is the appreciation of our Almighty Head. But so far as we may legitimately desire just appreciation from others, the way to win is "to mind our own business." Let us preach a pure gospel, purify our own charges, extend the gospel with power, present the fruits of

righteousness; and then, if these outside Christians have anything of the mind of Christ, they will appreciate us as much as will be good for us.

4. We would also request brethren to consider whether another very serious objection to our entering this Alliance will not emerge from the nature of the representation which we shall unavoidably have in it. The meetings will usually be at a distance, and often across the ocean. Attendance must always be expensive, and often lavishly so. Such a journey to and from Europe as a delegate would wish to make must cost between \$700 and \$1,000. The Alliance proposes to allow us twenty-eight representatives. Has our Assembly between \$20,000 and \$28,000 to expend upon sending delegates to this useless convention? But it will be said, "All the twenty-eight need not go." We remark, first: Then what will our ratio of representation avail us? But second: If six or eight go, has the Assembly the \$7,000 to waste in this useless journey? Has it even \$2,000? Though it is obvious that the good sense of the Assembly will never consent to the abstraction of even this smaller sum from the urgent and sacred uses of our missions and other works for such a mere waste; and the church would cry shame upon the Assembly if it did commit the perversion. Then the commissioners will have to furnish their own expenses. But it is very well known that, to the great bulk of our ministers and elders, such an expense is about as much out of the question as a journey to the moon. The result, then, must be this: that when a selection of delegates is to be made, the Assembly, instead of electing the representative men of the church, the men who are worthy to be trusted with her honor, must appoint a committee who will seek out the men who have a trip to Europe in view on their own account, or who have private fortunes, or bad throats, coupled with rich and generous congregations. In other words, the selections will be determined, not by fitness, nor wisdom, nor experience, but by some mere irrelevant accident or advantage of money or leisure. This point alone is enough to betray the unsuitableness of the whole scheme for us and the impossibility of our deriving any good fruits from it.

5. Another fatal objection is, that this Alliance will only expose our church to additional peril from that which is the great evil of the times, the spread of a latitudinarian spirit. The

leading bodies with which we are invited to ally ourselves are *all tainted with broad-churchism*. That this charge is true as to the radical Presbyterian Church in America none among us can deny. The fusion of the two branches made it avowedly a broad church, as was demonstrated, not by our writers, but by the Rev. Drs. Hodge and Van Dyke and the Rev. Samuel Miller. As to another leading denomination represented in the Presbyterian Alliance, it was the fortune of the writer to hear the following sentiments publicly uttered by one of its prominent ministers, and applauded to the echo: "We have no right to require uniformity of doctrine or ritual within any of our own borders. We are bound to recognize *all the variety in our own church that we recognize in others*." That the same latitudinarian spirit is leavening the Presbyterian Churches of Great Britain is but too plain from their church journals. They no longer have the true ring of orthodoxy. The Presbyterian Church of France has lately been rent into two bodies. One is Rationalistic and Socinian; the other, the comparatively sound one, did not dare to readopt the Gallican Confession and enforce its teachings upon all its officers, but only adopted, in general terms, an evangelical creed. The broad-churchism of the Alliance itself is clearly disclosed by its ambiguous doctrinal basis. This is the "*consensus* of the Reformed Churches." Who shall state this *consensus*? Does it include the sense in which Drs. Beman and Barnes professed to hold the Westminster Confession? This is to be supposed. Again, according to the uniform classification of church history, the Congregational Churches of New England belong to the reformed branch of Protestant Christendom. Lately the highest convention known to this body of Christians formally cast away their doctrinal standards. Drs. N. Taylor and Bushnell are probably the accepted exponents of the larger part of their ministers. We presume that this *consensus* may embrace this type of the reformed theology also. We repeat, the associations into which this Alliance will introduce us will be found broad-church. Now, as long as the words of Scripture hold true, that "evil communications corrupt good manners," the association will inevitably be found unwholesome to our own soundness in the faith and doctrinal unity. But that watchman upon the walls of Zion, who "has knowledge of the times, to know what Israel ought to do," is aware that the peril

to truth and righteousness, from this latitudinarian spirit, is so fearful, that to expose our beloved church to it causelessly, is little short of madness.

Dr. Palmer, in his unanswerable argument at St. Louis, foreshadowed another influence which must make this Alliance a broad-church one. Its creed, as to doctrine and order, must be the result of concessions. Whatever is obnoxious to the convictions of any of the constituent bodies, must be eliminated from the common platform. One point must be conceded to one party, and another to another, until there is left, as the common doctrine taught by the Alliance, only the most emasculated Presbyterianism.

6. But there are more grave objections to this movement than those already unfolded. It contains the egg of a monster. The principle on which it is demanded is anti-Protestant and anti-Presbyterian. The first development may appear but harmless and trivial; indeed, the first organization is so trivial as to be nugatory and useless; but the principle which dictates the alliance will be sure to unfold itself with logical consistency, and the "King Log," which is now tendered to us silly frogs by this Jupiter Tonans of Nassau Hall, will in due time be replaced by the "King Stork." Dr. Blaikie, of Scotland, may be accepted as a good exponent of the movement. He tells us that the need of this Alliance is to supply a defect of Presbyterianism, which is an ecumenical presbyterial court at the *apex* of our constitutional system of Presbyteries and Synods. He declares that without such a visible centre of unity, our system is incomplete and weak; that Christ evidently did not design it to remain so; and that the true significance of this Alliance is, that it is the germ of that ecumenical court having supreme jurisdiction over all the churches in the earth. Do they propose to claim such jurisdiction for it? Oh! no; not now. This, says Dr. Blaikie, "would wreck the whole scheme." But yet he is discontented with the Evangelical Alliance, because its meetings "have avowedly been meetings, not of church representatives, but of individuals associated only in a private capacity." He desires that the delegates to the Pan-Presbyterian Council shall be representatives appointed by the Assemblies of the several churches, either directly or through committees. He says that we are as yet "unripe," indeed, for such a council as would have authori-

tative jurisdiction. "But the idea is of course not excluded." "Whether the council proposed will work towards such a result," is a question which he does not decide. But that it ought to work towards it, he very obviously believes and expects; since he declares it the "natural crown of an edifice which has never yet been brought to completion."

Such are the desires and theories which underlie and prompt this Alliance. *They involve one of the essential elements of popery.* The cardinal doctrine of the Reformers concerning the church was, that only the spiritual and invisible church could be catholic or ecumenical. They taught that the only unity designed by Christ among the several branches of his people on this earth was the spiritual unity. It was only on these premises that they were able to refute the pretensions of popery. If the edifice "is not brought to completion" until this visible ecumenical bond is provided, then it is still incomplete until a universal unity of the whole visible church, Reformed, Lutheran, and Episcopal, is formed; that is to say, a pope, either singular or plural. That such a papal head will need infallibility, and all other papal attributes, to decide correctly all the multifarious interests and differences of the Christian world, is very evident. Citations might easily be made from the soundest Reformed divines proving this point. Turretin denies that such an external unity in a visible centre is any mark of the true church. Principal Cunningham (*Hist. Theol.*, p. 24, of Vol. I.) says there is "no warrant in Scripture for alleging that the unity there predicated of the church of Christ necessarily implies that all the societies claiming to be regarded as churches of Christ must be included in one external visible communion, and subject to one external visible government." And in other places he intimates pretty clearly that this demand contains, in his view, the foundation principle of popery. Let the notions which the advocates of this Pan-Presbyterian Alliance desire, through it, to propagate, once become current, and we shall soon learn practically that there is little difference between a pope in the singular and in the plural number. The essential doctrines of popery will reappear: the necessity of outward uniformity; the damning nature of outward schism (so-called); the confounding of the attributes of the visible and invisible churches. Again, the same argument which demands that the

Presbyterian churches must be unified in a visible centre, will necessarily be extended to all others recognized as true churches, though non-Presbyterian—such as the Wesleyan, Lutheran, Congregational. Thus will come about a still wider confederation, not Pan-Presbyterian, but Pan-Protestant; and the necessary conditions of its existence will be precisely that combination of loose, unfaithful, *doctrinal* broad-churchism, with tyrannical enforcement of outward union and uniformity, which now characterizes popery. The Protestant world will be soon educated to set inordinate store by that of which God makes least account—formal union; *at the expense* of that which he regards as of supreme value—doctrinal fidelity. He who does not see that the Evangelical Alliance has already begun to produce this disastrous result must be blind indeed. It is obviously the “tidal wave” of modern sentiment, the “*zeit geist*” of our day, as truly as it was of the days of Leo the Great; and it is as vital to the life of Christianity now as it was then, that it be exposed and resisted.

The theory of real Presbyterianism is as plain as it is scriptural. It recognizes the subordination of courts and of a smaller part of one communion to the whole thereof (in the Lord), as represented in the higher or highest church court. It proposes to extend the communion thus united, *so far as hearty and thorough agreement upon the doctrines and church order extends, and no farther*. This subordination, affected beyond this, can lean only to tyranny or latitudinarianism, or both. Our fathers gave a notable illustration of this scriptural view in 1837. Finding under the nominal jurisdiction of our Assembly two schools of conviction as to both doctrine and order, they persistently destroyed the pretended unity and compelled a separation into two communions. Did they attempt to exclude the new school from the pale of the visible church catholic? Not at all. They continued to recognize their ordination, sacraments and church-rights. But they insisted that it must be a *separate church order*—so separate that they would not even enter into a “fraternal correspondence.” This was the Presbyterianism of the Bible—of the Reformers. Now, so far as a real and hearty unity of doctrinal belief and church order extends, so far may a supreme presbyterial court extend its common jurisdiction. Does such a real unity exist among the Presbyterian Churches of the

world? Will it ever exist this side the *millennium*? Differences of race, language, geographical position, national customs and interests will inevitably perpetuate such differences as will render it impossible to unite them all in one jurisdiction until "there shall be no more sea" and until the curse of Babel shall be repaired. Would the old Assembly, in the glorious days of 1845, have permitted the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Ireland, then so much sounder than they are now, to legislate for us, or even to claim the moral force of their recommendations over us? Nay, verily! Even to the latter our Assemblies sternly demurred—and rightly. They refused to allow the abolition diatribes of the Scotch and Irish to be obtruded on our people, knowing that the local and national differences of Great Britain disqualified them from understanding or handling our rights and duties in this matter. Our Assemblies did right. Slavery has been violently and wickedly abolished, partly through the mischievous influences of those very diatribes. *Have all the grounds of social and national difference in the future been abolished?* He must be a soft and childish Utopian indeed who flatters his hopes with this. "That which hath been is that which shall be." But men exclaim: Is not Christianity to make these things better? We reply: Yes; in that unknown future day when Christ shall, by his own secret power, by that kingdom which is within us, and not by men's exclaiming, "Lo here, and lo there," have made the churches "first pure, then peaceable." But the writer, for one, confesses that he fails to see a single hopeful sign that this blessing is to be brought to man by the hands of a generation of Christians who are now generally dominated by a truculent and infidel abolitionism; who confound with the Protestant theory of constitutional republican right the insane leveller's theory of the frantic Lilburn of Cromwell's day or the atheistic radicalism of the Reign of Terror, and impudently call them by the same name; who immerse modern society in the most lavish and luxurious sensuous indulgences ever known to any age; who revel everywhere in an atmosphere of ritualism and will-worship, and whose evangelical reign is signalized by this modern outbreak of social and political corruption, threatening, according to their own confession, to dissolve our social order in general moral putrescence.

7. The crowning objection to our representation in this Alli-

ance is, that our own constitution forbids it. We hold that, according to that constitution, our Assembly had precisely as much right to appoint commissioners to such a body as to appoint a Grand Lama for Thibet. "The Assembly only appointed a committee, with powers to appoint delegates." This evasion serves no purpose; for what the Assembly did by its committee, it virtually did *per se*; and if the connection between us and the Alliance is to subsist, future appointments must, of course, be made on the floor of the Assembly, or confirmed there. Now, either these councils are to be judicatories exercising church-power over the Assembly, or they are not. If they are, then representation in them is substantially a new feature, outside of our constitution. That instrument calls our Assembly our supreme court. In it all appeals and references stop; from it emanate the highest instructions, under Christ. But here is a higher court, and another source of authority. It is difficult to see how any moral truth can be plainer than this: that, if it is right for us to be represented in these councils, then the imperative step for us to take beforehand is to procure an amendment (or rather a revolution) in our own constitution, by an orderly reference to the Presbyteries. But gentlemen will take the other horn of the dilemma: they say the councils of this Alliance are not to be church courts. Very well; then they are private and voluntary meetings of Christians. From this point of view, the Assembly has neither power nor business touching an appointment to them. And precedents show that the Assembly has always understood its powers, as well as the proprieties of the matter, thus. The Assembly approves the Temperance cause. Has she ever condescended to appoint a commissioner to represent her in a Temperance convention? If such a thing were moved, any Assembly would rise up as one man and resist. But we have a case still more in point: The Assembly never consented by her authority to appoint a commissioner to the Evangelical Alliance. If any of her ministers went, they went on their own responsibility as private individuals. When the Alliance was about to meet in New York, and the Yankee heavens and earth were moved about it, our Assembly at Little Rock was not jostled from its course one minute—not a vote was cast in favor of its prostituting its authority to such an appointment. Now, this case is exactly parallel—this Presbyterian Alliance, according to

this second branch of the dilemma, is precisely an Evangelical Alliance of smaller extent.

We may be reminded of the clause in the Form of Government which clothes the Assembly with the power of "corresponding with foreign churches on such terms as may be agreed upon by the Assembly and the corresponding body," and of our Assembly delegates annually sent to the (Dutch) Reformed and the Associate Reformed Churches in America. We reply with the question: Is this Pan-Presbyterian Alliance *a church*? Has it ecclesiastical powers? If so, let it be spoken out. Again, the correspondence to be lawful must be between the Assembly and the *churches represented in the Alliance*. Is this so, or not? When Dr. Girardeau charged that our appearance in this Alliance brought us into correspondence with our detractors and injurers, the radical American Church, with whom we had so solemnly said we would not correspond, gentlemen said, Oh, no! Now, which is it? If we do not, in this Alliance, correspond with the churches represented in it, and that directly, including this one with which we refuse to correspond, this article gives our Assembly no right. Once more, the *terms* are to be arranged *between* the churches corresponding—not with a non-descript *tertium quid*. When Alexander of Macedon was asked to run a race at the Olympian games, he answered: "Yes, provided kings are my competitors." So, our Assembly deigns to treat, provided spiritual queens treat with her: she does not stoop to place herself on a level with any voluntary association of private persons which offers itself. Her acts are and must be authoritative and responsible. She demands a responsible party to treat with, and that not a superior, but an equal. Finally, who dreams that, under the modest word, "correspondence," the framers of our constitution ever designed to confer all these vague legislative powers? Their meaning in the constitution is the constitution. They doubtless chose the word correspondence, because *correspondence is not alliance*. My correspondent is not my business partner. The relation which our Assembly assigned to itself as to "foreign churches," was carefully chosen so as to repudiate that common visible centre of unity at which this Alliance aims, and to leave the manifestation of Christian unity, where the Bible leaves it, in community of principles, spirit, and affections.

It was with good reason, then, that Dr. Palmer warned Dr. Robinson, in the last Assembly, that in going into this Alliance he was launching into a disastrous revolution. The step which the Assembly has been betrayed into is but as "the letting out of waters." If the chasm be not speedily closed, we shall find ourselves upon a flood, which will strand us far from our proper moorings, and amidst the wreck of the precious interests which the Head of the Church has committed to our care.

“PAN-PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE.”¹

THE smoke of the conflict has now had time to clear away from the debates of our last Assembly upon its external relations sufficiently to allow a moderate spectator to estimate the conditions and results fairly. This the writer would beg leave to attempt as to the proposed “Alliance” of all Presbyterians. The numbers and vigor of the opponents to this project in all the earlier debates gave evident promise that the Alliance, in its first posture, would either have been rejected by a majority or relinquished by its friends out of respect to the minority. The seeming unanimity reached at last was procured by apparent concessions near the close of the meeting. One of these was the resolution adopted, that the funds of the Assembly shall in no case be taxed with any expenses of its commissioners to the Alliance. The other was Dr. Hoge’s resolution that “the Alliance is not to be regarded as another and a higher court, but as an assemblage of committees, for the purpose of joint conference and joint report,” etc. As for the rest, it cannot be said that the debate in the Assembly had modified the points of objection so strongly made by the opponents before and during the discussions. All that had been effected by the advocates up to this time was to predict some supposed possible gains from the Alliance, which remained uncertain and indefinite in their nature, and to stimulate an enthusiasm of taste in those whose temperaments were of a kind to be fascinated by this species of pious junketings. The great constitutional argument was virtually admitted by the majority in their adoption of Dr. Hoge’s explanatory resolution.

To the argument that the Alliance must be broad-church, unless it is to be unfair and one-sided, because it had so much broad-church constituency, no effective answer was made, and the attempted answer was nugatory.

The point so clearly put by Dr. Dabney, in the interests of

¹ Appeared in *The Southwestern Presbyterian*, December 14, 1876.

our own self-respect, was not even mentioned by the majority, so far as the reports of debate show. They seem to have adopted the only discreet course—a prudent silence; for, in fact, that point is, to the calm and independent mind, unanswerable. Every constituent body to the Alliance, save one or two of the smaller, have bitterly, and even contemptuously denounced the position actually and still held by the Southern church as to slave-holding, and have made it a ground for refusing to us communion and alliance. Meanwhile slavery in the United States has been destroyed by violence, so that no Christian among us is now formally a slaveholder. But, as a matter of doctrine and morals, our church really holds identically the position these proposing allies have always anathematized. Thus both candor and common honesty towards them and decent respect for ourselves and our fathers obviously require that we shall come to an understanding with our new comrades how it is that they now propose to embrace us, whom they lately rejected. Will any one say, No! because slavery is now a thing of the past? The resistless answer is that with us, as a church, IT IS NOT, for we to-day refuse to confess and retract as to our doctrine; and it is for this doctrine touching slavery we are, as a church, responsible. The only solution of this knot which had ever been spoken “out aloud” was one of so offensive a nature that it seemed amazing any gentleman in the South could fail to regard it as a positive affront. It was that proposed by Dr. McCosh, the actual inventor and main promoter of this Alliance, in 1866, in the Central Presbyterian Church, Baltimore. Dr. Dabney stated it thus: “That Dr. McCosh, then speaking for the ‘Evangelical Alliance,’ said the American churches had been properly excluded for their complicity with slavery; but that that Alliance was now willing to receive them, because slavery in America had been abolished.” This extraordinary statement raised, to every Southern mind, these questions: Are we, then, to be whitewashed before the Christian world from this asserted black and damning stain by the mere fact that material force keeps back our hands from the act—our principles remaining the same avowedly? And if this is the idea, does it not reveal, first, a moral profligacy and deceit in the inviters, such as to cure us effectually of all desire for their embraces? And, second, are Southern gentlemen, conscious of rectitude in this matter and

justly aggrieved by a long train of gratuitous libels and insults about it, to accept *this* as amends sufficiently full for their self-respect and the good name of sainted fathers? Now, the attitude of Dr. McCosh, and of most of the Northern, British and Continental churches, is to-day such as to renew the point of these questions, as to this second Alliance, with irresistible force. We do not see how the majority could have looked each other in the face and attempted to argue these questions without blushing. They did well to be silent about them—well for their weak cause! It was all they could do. The *Central Presbyterian* did, indeed, make a sort of vacillating attempt to break the fatal point of the questions by professing to doubt the authenticity of the incident in Baltimore. But there are here two remarks: one is, that if Dr. McCosh did not put it thus, it does not seriously modify the case, for the essential facts remain. The other is that we understand Dr. Dabney cites Dr. Thomas E. Peck as express eye-witness of the facts stated, and that he considers himself warranted to refer publicly, if needful, to his authority.

In the second place, the concession which the Assembly made touching the travelling expenses really concedes the argument founded by the opponents upon the unwarrantable cost. The Assembly resolves that she will not pay a penny of the expenses for her own commissioners. But why not? If it is right for her to send them, it is right for her to pay. If she actually does delegate the duty of representing her to certain brethren, then she is morally and scripturally bound to pay their expenses. Who "goeth a warfare at his own charges?" Why, then, does the Assembly claim the right to send, and yet shirk her duty to pay? It is because her conscience tells her, that this is not an errand on which it would be righteous to expend God's revenues. Then it follows, that it is not an errand on which she can righteously expend the time of God's servants. The plea is put in, that if it does not suit the feelings of the commissioners to pay their own expenses, some liberal persons or churches will produce the money. But the objection is: that these commissioners should not represent these liberal persons, as they virtually do on this indirection; they should represent the church, and be paid by the church. And again: The Assembly ought to instruct these liberal persons that it is their duty to feel concern-

ing their money devoted to pious uses just as the Assembly feels about hers, viz.: that this "religious pic-nic" is not an object to which God's revenues may be righteously perverted. We are compelled, with pain, to admit that the unanswerable force of this argument against the Alliance has been the occasion of the Assembly's taking an attitude just such as our British neighbors characterize by the word "shabby."

But the main argument against the Alliance is the constitutional one. If it is a new court, our adhesion is a revolution of our constitution. If it is not, it is a "voluntary" association; a human invention which our church has always refused to meddle with in any official capacity, regarding all such recognition as both unconstitutional and un-Presbyterian. This inexorable demonstration the *Central Presbyterian* endeavored to evade by a pleasant story, whose fun was very good, but whose logic was very bad: An Irishman heard a debate, whether a given adjective was to be pronounced "*Neether*" or "*Nyther*." He, demurring to both proposals, said it was "*Nayther*." So saith the *Central Presbyterian*. The Alliance is neither a new court, nor a voluntary association; but a bundle of committees. This was the resort adopted by the Assembly, under the guidance of Dr. Hoge. Such a view could never have prevailed in an Assembly of ours, had time and circumstances allowed its thorough examination. But the Assembly had, on the motion of Mr. Grattan, of Virginia, already committed the anomalous disorder, of allowing Dr. Hoge to *speak ad libitum and to amend, after it had passed, what was, as to all other members, the previous question!* So that the real discussion of this *committee-plot* is yet to be undertaken.

The very word sufficiently shows the nature of "committee." It is the passive past participle of an old French verb (modernized). It is the set of members of a legislative body, to whom is committed some matter by the body. The essential, the rudimental idea of a committee then is, that it discusses only what is committed to it by the body which appoints it. And it only reports back the results it has reached to the same body. In *Jefferson's Manual*, Sec. 11, are the following principles: "Nor can a committee receive a petition but through the house." "As soon as the house sits . . . the chairman (of the committee) is in duty bound to rise instantly." In Sec. 26:

"No bill shall be committed (referred to a committee) until it shall have been twice read." "The report being made, the committee is dissolved, and can act no more without a new power." In our Assembly, all the "standing committees," the number and importance of whose duties require something of a constitution, have their rules and by-laws always framed for them by the house. Thus, the true nature of a committee, as a mere creature of the Assembly, is distinctly maintained.

But how does this Alliance appear before us? Did it originate in a free action of our Assembly? Or, indeed, of any Assembly? No; it is the handiwork of irresponsible persons; who having first developed the creation in all but its details, bring it to sundry supreme courts—ours among others—and demand their adhesion. The Alliance makes its own constitution; made it last July in London; and then comes to our Assembly, saying in substance, "If you like it, you may adhere; and if you don't like it, you may let us alone." Does this wonderful cluster of "committees" wait to have business committed to it? Not at all. It assumes its own lines of business, of its own discretion. It has been demonstrated in the most literal manner that it is not committees. The whole precedent is utterly revolutionary and pregnant with danger and usurpation. Are we consoled with the plea that its determinations will "carry only a moral power?" This is the only kind of power carried by the Assembly itself; yet is the Assembly a spiritual court, and, if uncontrolled by a constitution, capable of fearful aggressions on Christian liberty. The truth is, that this Alliance, in the mode of its inception a voluntary association, must be, in its virtual working, a church court, or else a nullity. The most practical hope of the friends of Southern Presbyterianism is that the good sense and native independence of our people will defend them from the usurpation implied in the former character, and that the Alliance will therefore become the latter—a serious but useless farce. The action of our Assembly, in claiming to treat the Alliance as a mere cluster of committees, is so clear a change and rejection of the real character which it has selected for itself that the natural result would be our exclusion. The Alliance, if consistent in its adhesion to its principles, should say to our commissioners: "The thing to which *your* Assembly proposes to accede is wholly another thing from what we pro-

pose. We cannot submit to have our whole structure thus coolly transmuted at the bidding of one of the lesser applicants. You cannot enter on your terms." "So mote it be!" But we apprehend that no such consistency rules in the Alliance. Their appetite is for accessions and *eclat* on any terms, consistent or inconsistent. Provided they can get numbers, names and a virtual power unknown to our constitution, they will not boggle at an inconsequent action or an impertinence.

THE SOUTHERN CHURCH AND THE PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE.¹

I HAVE good a reason for wishing that your paper were read by every Presbyterian in the Southern States. It is this: I wish to reach them with a few plain views touching that "passage" in the last General Assembly at Knoxville, in which the majority refused to define the presence of our church in the Presbyterian Alliance at Edinburgh. If I may judge by appearances at Knoxville and since, I have little chance of being allowed to speak to my brethren on this subject, except through the columns of our newspapers. At least, that chance appears so "slim" that I do not intend to run the risk of refusal by asking for it.

The facts of the case are contained in the Minutes of the Assembly of 1878. This is the outline of them: That the churches composing virtually the body and weight of the Presbyterian Alliance, namely, the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the New School Presbyterian Church of America and the Old School Presbyterian Church of America (now fused into the great *omnibus* church of the North), had at different times reviled and condemned us for having slaves as virtual "men-stealers," as worthy to be classed with "murderers of fathers," as having on us a "dark and deadly stain," as being morally bound to the immediate duty of emancipation in all cases and as being guilty of "heresy and blasphemy" in our doctrine about slavery. To these the two Northern Presbyterian Churches added the accusations of "treason" against the best and noblest of our brethren, because they exercised their right of conscience in obeying their State governments as to the Confederacy; and

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those churches formally and earnestly demanded of the conquerors the murder of these beloved brethren of ours on the gallows.

The next important fact is : that the Assembly of 1848, then including all the Old School Presbyterians in the North itself, almost unanimously resolved that these libels were so unjust and unscriptural that our church never should, and never could, have anything more to do with the bodies making them, until they were withdrawn. The Assembly of 1845—two-thirds of it in the North—had meantime made that decision, which will forever remain impregnable truth, that while the church has no business to legislate either for or against civil institutions not sin *per se*, and while it should always rebuke the abuse of any relation by cruelty or injustice, it could not scripturally make mere slave-holding a sin *per se*, or a bar to communion, because God allowed it to his people in the Bible.

The next important fact is : that our Assembly in 1865, after the fall of the Confederacy, declared that, while on the one hand it was the duty of Southern Christians to submit peaceably to the act of the conquerors, in depriving them of their lawful property in the labor of their bondsmen ; yet, on the other hand, the success of violence could not affect in the least the right or the wrong of the relation, and that the truth was just what it was before.

The next important fact is : that in 1866, the Northern Presbyterians in their Assemblies, while fiercely renewing their libels, expressly touched upon the declaration of our Assembly ; declared that this made our position just as wicked as if we still had the slaves ; that our being kept from holding them merely by Federal bayonets did not make us one whit less wicked ; and that consequently we are not to be forgiven until we had taken this position back, and professed repentance for uttering it. Now, had the relation ever been sinful, the Northern Presbyterians would have been obviously right in this ; for a church is a spiritual commonwealth ; has concern with opinions and principles as well as overt acts ; and ought to require sinful men to give up the love of sin in their hearts, as well as hold back their hands from it when compelled.

The next and all important fact is : that our Assemblies did, from 1870 to 1876, in various ways, and with the most perfect

uniformity and unanimity, declare that, while we ought to try to be forbearing, patient and forgiving under wrong, our duty to truth and to ourselves made it impossible for us to enter into formal relations with these accusing church-courts until these dreadful libels were withdrawn. Is there a man in the South, worthy of the name of a man, who did not say that our Assemblies were right in this?

But between 1875 and 1877, the project of a Pan-Alliance of Presbyterians was ripened, and its projectors, and its authorities, as soon as it came to have any, volunteered an invitation to our church to enter. It saw fit to do so in July 1877, through the Assembly's appointed commissioners, in the first council of the Alliance in Edinburgh. But the churches, so lately our accusers, did not retract their charges of "men-stealing," "heresy," etc., nor did they make any allusion to them.

Remembering that the invitations to us to enter the Alliance came from them, I could only see two possible constructions of their conduct: they extended this invitation with a perfect knowledge of our unchanged defensive position; hence, the construction honorable to them and to us is, that in doing so they tacitly, but by distinct inference, withdrew so much of their former denunciations as attacked our fair name and decent reputation as a body of Christians.

The only other construction of their unsought advances to us is so insulting to them that I am unwilling to ascribe it to any body of Christians. It would be to charge them with embracing, for mere policy, men whom they believed they had hitherto righteously rejected for odious sins, only because force had estopped the further perpetration of them, while the sinners' hearts were as foul as ever. Hence I believe that our church is fairly entitled to assume the more charitable and honorable construction, and thus improve a happy juncture to reinstate our good name and heal a lamentable scandal and schism. Hence, I ventured to move the Assembly to declare, in most courteous terms, that it was upon this construction, honorable to all parties, it appears as a member of the Alliance. And whilst I drew up a statement and resolution, I expressly said to the members that this was only done as an expedient for presenting the case distinctly, and was in place of a speech, (for I made almost none). I invited them to consider the proposal,

to disregard my statement of it, and to shape any action which would be just to the truth and our church in their own way, and not in mine.

The Minutes of the Assembly will show the result. The majority determined that they would not listen to our proposal, would not confer with us about this point of our common church's right and good name, would not debate it and would not permit the Assembly to act upon it. Hence, when we, with generous courtesy, waived all debate in order to get a simple expression of the Assembly's mind on the proposal, the majority choked the request with the undebatable motion to "lay on the table" by a vote of 69 to 41. We, of course, protested. The majority first raised a committee to prepare an answer to this protest, and then, by formal motion and vote, actually forbade it to attempt to answer the argument of the protest, except upon a trivial technical point! It is surmised that this is the first time in the history of our Assemblies that such a wonderful thing was done.

The plain reader will doubtless have this obvious question in his mind: If the arguments of the paper and protest were so unanswerable that the majority had actually to forbid their own able committee from attempting the perilous task, would it not have been better to accept them? If personal triumph had been the object of the protestants, instead of the honor of the church, they certainly had enough to satisfy them in thus reducing the majority to the helpless condition of the Israelites before the expostulation of Elijah, "And they answered him not a word."

Now, what I affirm is that this majority erred; that the next Assembly ought to retrace the fatal misstep, and that the church ought to speak so as to put necessary nerve into the commissioners of the next Assembly to ensure their doing so.

1. I assert this, first, because that majority sacrificed their friends to their recent enemies and slanderers. The only motive which could be gleaned from their unfraternal refusal even to advise with us about the honor of our beloved Zion, was the fear of giving offence to their newly formed allies in the churches so lately reviling us. But they were willing to wound our most loyal and sensitive affections for the truth and good name of the church, and to refuse us a precious right of self-defence—

us, who are their brethren, who have been for long and weary years standing shoulder to shoulder with them, in defence of what they profess to hold as true and right.

2. I assert it, because their action involves an insult to these new allies of theirs, such as I, no friend to this Alliance from the first, could not find it in my conscience to fling at those accusers of my beloved church. It is this: the only ground of objection which could be extracted from the majority was, that our Assembly's adoption of any such action would certainly provoke the anti-slavery churches, now quiescent, to flame out again into denunciations of us as bitter as the old ones, and thus the present "happy" fraternization would be all spoiled. That is to say: the majority think so much more meanly than I do of these new allies of theirs—whose feelings they consult in preference to their own old friends—that they believe all their advances and their courtesies at Edinburgh to be hollow; they believe that those new allies, for policy's sake, were guilty of the moral obliquity of doing honor to men lately "men-stealers, heretics," etc., under the disgraceful pretext that just now we are forcibly stopped from overt men-stealing! A "happy" fraternization this, indeed! which its own artificers suspect to be thus hollow.

3. I assert that the majority did wrong by this *ad hominem* argument. That if this uncharitable suspicion of theirs were just, then our affiliation with such hollow allies would be degrading to our church, inconsistent with its whole past testimony, and a criminal betrayal of truth. We resolve invariably, ever since 1848, that we cannot lie under such a libel, and then we go to Edinburgh in 1877, and lie down beside the men who, as the majority suppose, have the same libel in their hearts.

4. I object to this action, because it forfeits a happy opportunity to assert the good name of our afflicted church, so long slandered, and of settling, honorably to all parties, a long-pending schism in Presbyterian Christendom. I do not think so ill of our recent accusers as to ascribe to them the *animus* imputed to them by the majority. In 1848, when the Scotch and Irish churches so foully slandered Southern Christianity, they knew nothing about it. Now they know us better. In 1866 our Northern accusers were burning with passion, and had sectional ends to win by blackening us. That passion has subsided; those ends are secured. Neither the European nor the North-

ern anti-slavery men really think of us as they once did. Time is a great teacher. This potent teacher is rapidly opening their eyes to the deadly affinity between abolitionism and communism. They are rapidly learning how absolute a failure their own once-boasted hireling society is as an organization of labor. We have, therefore, no call now to cower before this once-arrogant pharisaism. The time is rapidly approaching for truth to assert its victory and our vindication. Our timidity at such a time is gratuitous; it is short-sighted. Our wisdom, as well as our duty is, at this day especially, to stand boldly to our colors, renew the assertion of our good name, and thus aid the triumph of truth. Hence I lament this action, because it deprives our church of an easy vindication. The Alliance will not be so blind as overtly to reject the construction I tender them, so honorable alike to us and them, when the alternative is the avowal of a moral obliquity disgraceful to themselves. The Alliance will tacitly allow our construction, and that will be our vindication. They will not profess to like slavery; they will still say they think it a bad system, liable to many abuses; they will say that the British and New England governments never ought to have forced either Africans or slavery upon Virginia against her perpetual protest (so say I); they will still denounce all cruelties upon the helpless, committed by evil masters. Let them do so; no Southern man objects. But they will not repeat the charge that the mere holding of bondsmen is *malum per se*, for they know it is in the teeth of the Bible; or that Southern Christianity was polluted with a "dark and deadly stain," for they know that it was and is as creditable as any other Christianity. We have an impregnable vantage ground in now assuming the position I advised, that they tendered the invitation to us to enter the Alliance. They tendered it knowing our position and unchanging testimony. This entitles us to assume that they proposed to meet us at length as equals, and not as polluted with a "dark and deadly stain." They cannot gainsay it without disgracing themselves.

5. I lament this action, because it is unjust to our honored commissioners in the first council. The present attitude of the Assembly leaves their presence in Edinburgh ambiguous, and exposes them to the charge—which is actually made—that by appearing there, they did virtually utter a "*peccavimus*" un-

authorized, and thus subjected us to all those enormous accusations.

Now, if our commissioners did this, they did a great wrong; one which should justly excite the hot indignation of Southern Presbyterians. Let the reader notice. It is not I who say they did us this foul wrong; BUT THE ASSEMBLY WOULD NOT LET THEM SAY THEY DID NOT, and this, when adversaries are publicly charging that they did! In this the Assembly is unjust and cruel to their own commissioners, who tried to serve them faithfully.

6. I object that the present attitude of the Assembly is wrong, because our accusers are perverting it to our defamation. I forewarned them in Knoxville that their course would be thus interpreted, and that to all hostile minds the interpretation would appear forcible. Thus, the Assembly is respectfully asked to say, by those who have a right to ask, whether or not it sent commissioners to Edinburgh to make an implied confession of judgment to the foul charges of their Edinburgh allies against their own constituency. The Assembly is silent—refuses to answer. Thereupon hostile minds will of course conclude “silence gives consent.” They will infer the Assembly is silent, because it knows that the appearance of its commissioners was a confession of judgment; but it is ashamed to say so “out aloud” as yet. “We abolitionists must not be too hard on the sinners, but give them time to eat dirt.”

Two newspapers among us said they thought the declaration needless, because they presumed the attitude of our church in the Alliance was not misunderstood. But the answer is demolishing—IT IS MISUNDERSTOOD. The construction shameful to us is publicly asserted. Before I had finished reading my prophetic protest in the house, a fulfilment appeared in the morning papers of the town, expressly and insolently asserting that construction. As soon as the *New York Evangelist's* reporter could get home, that paper published the same construction, boasting over faithful consistent supporters of the Southern church. It actually argued that the Assembly's position was unquestionably a surrender and confession of judgment, because otherwise “Dr. Dabney's paper was unanswerable.” The same construction has been taken up by other Northern papers (I know not how many), with insolent expressions of triumph, and a hurling of obloquy against the faithful defenders of the As-

sembly's professed principles—obloquy from which a just government is bound to defend its own servants.

Here is a literal statement of the position into which the reputation of us and our forefathers is thus thrust: I had a venerable father and mother, whose good name was as "ointment poured forth" among all, white and black, who knew them. They are now "with the Lord." They were born, lived and died slaveholders. Accusers charged that they were "men-stealers, worthy to be classed with murderers of fathers and mothers, heretics, profane, making a dark and deadly stain" on their profession. The Assembly of 1848, composed of a majority of Northern men, know that the slander was so wicked that they felt it their duty to protect my father's and mother's good name, and Bible truth, and did it by declaring that they would not hold ecclesiastical intercourse with the slanderers. Our Southern Assemblies all did the same up to 1874. But now the Assembly pursues a certain course, which some of the accusers say means a sanction of the charge. That is, these men publicly say that they understand our Assembly as virtually saying, with them, that my parents were men-stealers, etc. And with this assertion ringing in the public prints, the Assembly proposes to remain obstinately silent! How near does this come to allowing themselves to be made voluntary accessories to these foul slanders on my sainted parents? It is not becoming, perhaps, for me to give the answer. This view of the position is so ugly that an effort will, of course, be made to say, "There is exaggeration in it." Wherein? I challenge correction! No; it is the plain and unvarnished statement of fact. Instead of brethren indolently saying, "Oh! there must be exaggeration!" they had better open their eyes, brush away the dust of prejudice and timidity, and look their position honestly in the face. And now, here is the strength of this view: not that these slandered saints, "of whom the world was not worthy," were my parents, but that the honor and good name of the humblest man's parents in the Southern church are justly as dear to him as mine are to me. Mine were not the great of this world, but they were not blots on Christianity. No. And never shall this voice be silenced, by Assembly or abolitionist, from their righteous defence, and the defence of their Southern equals, until they and their slanderers appear with me before that unerring bar to which I appeal.

7. I object to this position of the Assembly, because the charge under which our church has been lying is not one about which men can honestly "agree to differ." There are accusations such as to necessitate, not strife indeed, but righteous self-defence. Henry VIII. charged that his Queen, Anne Boleyn, was guilty of infidelity to him. She asserted her innocence. In such an issue it would have been criminal for them to "agree to differ" and continue together. If the charge was true, he ought not to have remained a party to the infamous union. If it was false, it would have been treason to her good name and the honor of her sex to remain passive under it, and reward the criminal slanderer with her love. This difference between our anti-slavery accusers and us is equally inexorable, and there are but two ways to solve it without sin: one is our conviction, confession and reformation, if we are guilty of the charge; the other is its withdrawal, if we are innocent. There ought not to be a middle way; there cannot be, without criminality on one side or the other. If those churches were correct in formally charging me with "men-stealing," etc., and I am still unrepentant and unreformed, then they ought not to admit me to their communion. But I have declared that I am not repentant. The forcible confiscation of my property by others does not change my guilt. Were I left to myself, I should doubtless be holding my servants to-day (and a blessed thing it would be for them if I were). If this charge is not just, then it is a slander inflicted on me under the most formal and aggravated circumstances; and I cannot surrender my own vindication without treason to my good name and the credit of Christ's people among whom I am numbered. The issue is inexorable. The obligation of charity does indeed require me to forbear retaliation and revenge, and to render "good for their evil;" but to make it a pretext for betraying truth and righteousness merely because I happen to be one of the persons in whom they are assailed, is worse than confused logic; it is moral obliquity.

Last: I solemnly declare to the brethren of the majority that, in thus throwing away this critical and fortunate juncture for asserting our good name before the Presbyterian world, our church will be apprehended in all future history as having virtually fallen from its testimony, fatigued with the labor and insulation, and as having submitted to the foul charge fixed

on it by the major number of voices. The verdict of history will doubtless be that the loud and arrogant majority have triumphed; that our voice has been silenced by a tardily-awaking conscience, our testimony surrendered, and the infamous sentence of abolitionists submitted to. If we are silent now, we shall never again have a hearing at the bar of history. The protest against the unjust condemnation which I would have the church perpetuate is not only the *minimum* of defensive action which truth and manliness in us ought to tolerate, but it is the only protest which can be effectively uttered at all. While we sit silent, the traducers of us and our noble dead are still filling the ear of the world with their enormous slander. At the very hour when the representatives of these accusing churches were "wining and dining," psalm-singing and speechifying so unctuously with our commissioners in Edinburgh, their abolition partisans were still telling the world, in every form, in newspapers and political speeches, in histories and philosophies, in theological treatises and commentaries, in geographies and school histories, in novels and tales, in dramas and farces, in translations in thirteen languages, of the lies of Uncle Tom's Cabin; that Southern society was barbarous, Southern Christianity a blot, Southern Christians men-stealers, and our Lees, Davises and Johnstons indebted only to the magnanimous mercy of abolition Christianity for not ending their ignominious career on a righteous gibbet. Who is to speak effectively for us if our own church, "the pillar and ground of the truth," is silent? They say: "Let individuals of Dr. Dabney's sentiments write in reply." Have I not written? There stands my "Defence of Virginia and the South," whose arguments, founded on Scripture and facts, are as impregnable as the everlasting hills. But who reads it? The self-satisfied insolence of the pharisaic slanderers makes them disdain it—they never condescend to hear of it. I have no audience. But when our church appears in that Alliance, she has Christendom for her audience. Her circumstances compel the ear of the Christian world. It is her duty to her dead, to her children, to God, to speak. Her long-suffering dignity may forbid her to wrangle. It may even prompt her to appeal her cause to a higher judgment. But she is bound still to remind the accusers that she does not admit the infamous indictment nor confess

judgment. This is the least that self-respect or duty permits. Less than this will be the occasion of helping to fix on us and the men who died for our defence a historical estimate similar to that which we form of the Druse and Koordish masters and Arab slave-hunters.

But the error of the majority of Knoxville need not be like the law of the Medes and Persians, which changeth not. There is still time to save our duty and credit. Let the people at home, the eldership, all whose plain honest sense is not debauched, speak out, and say to the next Assembly: "Our good name is not to be betrayed by its own guardians." The next Assembly may "say, in a few plain words," to Presbyterian Christendom, what is true and right, and our honor is still saved. Let the Assembly say it in its own words: not in mine.

I do not conceive that in giving this advice, I am estopping myself at all from exercising my independent judgment touching the Alliance, of which our Assembly has made itself a member. I did not approve of it. I did not believe it was constitutional, or safe, or useful, or prudent. But I am not factious. The Assembly resolved by a majority to go into it, and far be it from me to seek to obstruct their rights as a majority. An honest subaltern, present in a council of war, advised against a projected expedition. He argued that it was neither lawful, nor strategically wise; but he was overruled. He did not become factious, nor did he desert. He stood faithfully in his obscure lot; and when he saw his countrymen entangled in the consequences of their misadventure, he pointed out the best way to extricate themselves, and to gain, even from the unwise expedition, the best results for his country which righteousness permitted. Having done this, must he therefore suppress his honest judgment that the adventure should never have been made? I think not.

THE DANCING QUESTION.¹

MODERN society, while condemning sternly many things which the ancients tolerated or even applauded, countenances some things which they utterly rejected. It is very pleasant and natural for us quietly to assume that ours is the advanced and civilized age. But when men reason thus, "A given usage cannot be improper, because Christian opinion and society allow it among us," they reason in a circle. If the propriety of the usage is in question, then there are two hypotheses to be examined, of which one is, "Ours is a pure state, and therefore what we tolerate must be pure;" but the other is, "This tolerated usage being impure, it proves our state corrupt." Now, the decision between the two hypotheses cannot be made by a self-sufficient assumption. Oriental, Greek and Papal Christianity justifies many things which we think excessive corruptions by just such an assumption. It is no more valid in our case than in theirs. Indeed, the very tendency to such self-sufficiency is, according to the Bible, one of the strongest symptoms of corruption. The matter must be settled by a fair appeal to Bible morals. These remarks are made because many relaxed Christians now virtually settle the dancing question by this short and easy sophism. They see numerous persons who claim Christian character tolerate or advocate dancing. They assume that all these are a very proper kind of Christians. Thus they "jump to the conclusion" that, in spite of the opinions of the "old fogies," dancing must be a very proper thing. Now, in opposition, no charge is here made as to the character of our fashionable Christianity, but this obvious thesis is asserted that, should the dancing usages of fashionable Christian society be found in fact corrupt, then their easy tolerance among us is a sign, not of their innocence, but of a fearful and unsuspected corruption of our state.

¹ An article which appeared in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for April, 1879.

Circumstances now give this matter a peculiar importance. The discussion involves not only the wrong or right of dancing, but many other vital questions, such as the extent of church power, the nature of the church's didactic function, Christian liberty, with its "metes and bounds," the obligation of Christian charity to avoid causeless offence, and the social morality proper for God's people. These all-important questions need exposition and reassertion from time to time. It is evident that such a need now exists.

It is expressly admitted in the outset that there are acts which are sinful, and yet are not such offences as are properly reached by church discipline. (Book of Discipline, Chap. I., Sec. 5.) Hence the proof that dancing is sinful would not suffice to demonstrate that it is disciplinable, and each proposition requires a separate discussion.

On the question whether dancing is an innocent recreation for Christians, it must be remarked that the act must be considered in the concrete, with its usual circumstances, adjuncts and consequences. Practically, these determine the question of moral propriety. No one affirms that there is sin *per se* merely in the rhythmical motion of human members to music. Just as some killing is the sin of murder and some is not, some beating is the sin of assault and battery and some is not, so the attendant circumstances give the moral character to this form of motion. It is proposed first to state the judgment of past ages. The classic heathens of antiquity ever regarded dancing for amusement, even of a male *solus*, or of males with males, as contemptible in a free-born adult, and inconsistent with manly dignity and self-respect. In a religious ceremonial, the *afflatus* of the divinity was supposed to authorize this extravagance of motion, and make it excusable at least, if not compatible with a freeman's dignity. The dancing of females with males for social amusement would have been regarded as an act so inconsistent with decency that an instance can scarcely be heard of in reputable society. Greek and Roman gentlemen, whose amusements in their *symposia* and *cenae*, with no lady present, were certainly far from strict, found much interest in the evolutions and pantomimes of professional dancers, male and female. But the actors were usually slaves, and the profession was regarded as worse than menial. Such is a fair digest of the testimony of antiquity. The earliest witness

cited is that of Herodotus, the "father of history." In Book VI., 139, he relates that Kleisthenes, the chief magistrate of Sicyon, having a marriageable daughter, collected many of the chief men of Greece as her suitors. Among these, the favored suitor was Hippocleides, son of Tisandros, from Athens. At a male entertainment, after the drinking had proceeded far, this young man, calling on the *auletes* to play for him, danced first some Laconian and then some Attic figures. Herodotus proceeds: "Kleisthenes, while he was dancing these, though loathing the thought of having Hippocleides as his son-in-law, by reason of his dancing and indecency, still constrained himself, not wishing to break out on him. But when he saw him gesturing with his legs, he was no longer able to hold in, but said: 'Well, son of Tisandros, thou hast danced away thy bride.' The daughter was given to another."

The eminent and accurate Greek scholar, Becker, in his *Charicles*, says (p. 103): "Though the art of dancing was so highly prized, though it served to give *éclat* to the festivals and shows, and though the guests of the *symposia* delighted to see the feats of a skilful *artist*; still, in private life it was little practiced, and there seems to have arisen almost a prejudice against it. . . . it seems to have been considered incompatible with the dignity of a man. . . . Indeed, it was usually looked upon as a preliminary symptom of intoxication."

As to the opinion of the Romans, Dr. Wm. Smith (*Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, p. 852), concludes thus: "Dancing, however, was not performed by any Roman citizens except in connection with religion; and it is only *in reference to such dancing* that we are to understand the statements that the ancient Romans did not consider dancing disgraceful, and that not only freemen, but the sons of senators, and noble matrons practiced it. In the later times of the Republic we know that it was considered highly disgraceful for a freeman to dance; Cicero reproaches Cato for calling Murena a 'dancer.'" Dr. Smith then quotes a part of the famous passage in the *Oratio pro Murena*, c. 6: "Saltatorem appellat L. Murenam Cato. Maledictum est, si vere objicitur, vehementis accusatoris; sin falso, maledici conviciatori. . . . Non debes . . . temere consulem Populi Romani saltatorem vocare; sed conspiciere quibus præterea vitiis affectum esse necesse sit eum, cui vere istud objici

possit. Nemo fere saltat sobrius, nisi forte insanit, neque in solitudine, neque in convivio moderato," etc. "Tu mihi arripis il, quod necesse est omnium vitiorum esse extremum." The *Oratio in Pisonem*, c. 10, 22, may be compared. Forcellini and Facciolati, in their Latin Thesaurus, define thus: *Saltator: mollis artifex et probrosus*. To one who knows antiquity this statement will appear perfectly moderate and reasonable: that had the daughter, not only of a rigid Cato, but of a flexible Cicero or Julius, done precisely the thing which is currently done by Christian females at modern dancing parties, Roman opinion would have such a sense of the disgrace that on the following morning the father would have consulted the leading parents of his "Gens," and, with their full moral support, would have exerted his autocratic domestic authority to consign the disgrace of his house to an imprisonment, which she would have not a little reason to submit to thankfully, as the alternative of a capital penalty. Roman opinion was not an infallible ethical standard? No. But it gives us the estimate of one civilized age. And if Roman morals were in many points deplorably relaxed, and yet judged this amusement thus, there is yet room for the question, whether a sounder standard of morals might not condemn it even more clearly.

But let us now look at the verdict of Christian antiquity. Chrysostom (court preacher at Byzantium), expounding the history of Herodias' daughter in Matthew, says: "Where dancing is, there is the devil. For God did not give us our feet for this end, that we might demean ourselves indecently; but that we might walk decently, not prance like a parcel of camels; but that we may exult with the angels. If even the body is disgraced, which perpetrates this indecency, much more the soul. . . . Dancing is the devil's invention."

The councils of the early Church frequently condemned the practice. The fifty-third Canon of the Synod of Laodicea enacts, "Christians when coming to weddings must not caper or dance; but dine or sup decently as becomes Christian people." The same synod forbids clergymen when attending marriages even to witness dancing exhibitions. The Synod of Agatho says (A. D. 450): "Dancing to songs or music of an amatory or loose character are absolutely inhibited to all Christians." So enacts the council of Illerda, A. D. 515. The eighth universal Council

of the church (*in Trullo*) (A. D. 692) enacts: "We also forbid and expel all public dances of women, as producing much injury and ruin."

We now hasten to modern Christian judgment and legislation. Presbyterianism has uttered no uncertain sound. Calvin insisted on the discipline of dancing in Geneva. The Westminster Assembly Larger Catechism, Question 139, declares "lascivious dancing and stage-plays" breaches of the Seventh Commandment. The Scotch Assembly of 1649, "finding the scandal and abuse that arises through *promiscuous dancing*, do therefore *inhibit and discharge the same*, and do refer the *censure thereof* to the several presbyteries," etc. So the Scotch Assembly of 1701, "do revive the acts of the General Assembly of 1648, discharging promiscuous dancing," etc. If recent use has allowed these acts to fall into such desuetude as to justify the assertion that Scotch Presbyterianism does not now discipline for dancing, the comment made on the neglect, by its manifest influence on the morals of the Scotch peasantry, is the best demonstration of error.

Let us now hear the testimony of American Presbyterianism. The Assembly of 1818 pronounced dancing in "its highest extremes" as admitted by all to be of "fatal consequences." (Round dances were then unknown in America.) The Assembly "apprehends danger from its incipient stages;" and requires church members to "heed on this subject the admonitions of those whom you have chosen to watch for your souls." The Assembly of 1827 virtually repeats this action. In 1789 the Synod of North Carolina, in reply to an overture, requires that persons guilty of dancing, horse-racing, etc., must be "dealt with by their spiritual rulers." This action, being allowed tacitly by the Assemblies which reviewed the Synod's proceedings, becomes of authority as expounding the law.

The existence, and consequently the action on this subject, of our Southern Assembly, are recent, and should be familiar to us. Hence only the main points are recalled. In 1865 our Assembly decided, 1st, That while no church court "has a right to make any new rules of church membership, different from those contained in the constitution," all courts, including church sessions, have the undoubted right "to make deliverances *affirming their sense of what is* 'an offence' in the meaning of the Book of Dis-

cipline, Chap. I., Sec. 3." 2nd, That our church courts have hitherto "probably been too tolerant of dancing," etc. 3rd, That "it is the duty of every judicatory to enforce the teachings of our standards on this and other fashionable amusements." Those teachings "repeatedly" uttered by the supreme judicatory and now reaffirmed at large, are that dancing is "in direct opposition to the Scriptures and our standards," is indisputably a "worldly conformity," and is liable to "excesses." What species of "enforcement" this Assembly enjoins the church courts to employ is thus explained at the end of the enactment: "Instruction from the pulpit," prudent "admonition"; but when all other means fail, then "such methods of discipline *as shall separate from the church* those who love the world and whose practices conform thereto."

In 1869 the Assembly "heartily responds" to a similar question by "*earnestly and solemnly enjoining* upon all sessions and presbyteries under its care the *absolute necessity of enforcing discipline . . . against offences; under the word offences including . . . theatrical exhibitions and performances and promiscuous dancings.*"

In 1877 the Presbytery of Atlanta asked the Assembly to interpret the law of the church, as set forth in 1865 and 1869, as to these points: whether it forbade dancing, or only "promiscuous dancing." And if the latter, to what accident of the dance the word "promiscuous" referred. The answer of the Assembly is in these words:

"1. The Assembly has uniformly discouraged and condemned the modern dance, in all its forms, as tending to evil, whether practiced in public balls, or in private parlors.

"2. Some forms of this amusement are more mischievous than others—the round dance than the square, the public ball than the private parlor; but all are evil and should be discountenanced.

"3. The extent of the mischief done depends largely upon circumstances. The church session is therefore the only court competent to judge what remedy to apply; but the Assembly, being persuaded that in most cases it is the result of thoughtlessness or ignorance, recommends great patience in dealing with those who offend in this way."

When this is viewed in connection with the previous enactments—which are not repealed here, but virtually reaffirmed—its meaning is obvious: that while all dancing is against the law of the church, yet, as some forms are more mischievous than others, and attendant circumstances largely qualify the mischiefs, church

sessions should use great patience in dealing with offenders. But the law of the church clothes the sessions with discretion as to "what remedy" should be applied, mere remonstrance or judicial discipline. That the Assembly, notwithstanding its tenderness towards offenders, clothes the sessions with the power of judicial discipline, and designs its exercise in all the worse cases, is manifest. Why else do they authorize sessions to "judge what remedy to apply," and speak of their "dealing" with offenders? Again, the body clothed by the Assembly with the discretionary power is not the didactic agency, the pastor, nor even the individual elder, but *the judicial body, the session*. The Assembly indisputably authorizes judicial action in all such cases as are "mischievous" and cannot be curbed by didactic means, and that at the discretion of sessions.

The views and law of the great Wesleyan body may be gathered, first, from Wesley's own words. In his works, Vol. VII., p. 224, he says of square dances (round dances were then unknown in England): It seems God himself has already decided the question concerning dancing. If dancing be not evil in itself, yet it leads young women to numberless evils." So in Vol. II., p. 271, sermon on "The More Excellent way." "So (evil tendencies) undoubtedly have all public dancing. And the same tendency they must have, unless the same caution obtained among Christians which was observed among the ancient heathens. With them men and women never danced together, but always in separate rooms. This was always observed in ancient Greece and for several ages at Rome, where a woman dancing in company with men would have been at once set down as a ———." Wesley's classical attainments authorized him to speak of the ancient usage and opinion. So Adam Clarke: "Let them plead for it who will; I know it to be evil, and that only." Let the enactment of the Methodist Church South be taken as a specimen of Methodist *law* on this subject. The General Conference of 1874 added to their Book of Discipline, as an appendix, the Pastoral Letter of the Bishops. This, speaking of worldly amusements, says:

"Their multiplied and insidious forms are a source of perpetual temptation and damage, and are denounced by the word of God and by that part of our general rules which forbids 'the taking of such diversions as cannot be used in the name of Jesus.' This denunciation is explicit and comprehensive. 'The name of the Lord Jesus' in this connection is a decisive test; and we are content to

leave the issue to its sovereign arbitrament. Amongst those indulgences which cannot stand this solemn test is the modern dance, both in its private and public exhibitions, as utterly opposed to the genius of Christianity as taught by us. When persisted in, *it is a justifiable ground of judicial action by the church authorities.*"

The Protestant Episcopal Church has been sometimes unjustly called a "dancing church." But the tenor of its verdict against dancing may be seen in the following:

Bishop Hopkins, speaking only of square dances: "No ingenuity can make it consistent with the covenant of baptism." Bishop Meade: "Social dancing *is not among the neutral things* which, within certain limits, we may do at pleasure, and it is not even among the things lawful but not expedient; but it is *in itself wrong*, improper, and of bad effect." This Bishop Meade spoke of "social dancing"; what would he have said of round dances? The latter, Bishop Cox pronounces "enormities" and "lascivious." Bishop Johns calls round dances "lascivious" and a "demoralizing dissipation." "This scandal is not to be tolerated in the church of Christ." "If all such efforts (as remonstrances and instructions) prove unavailing, . . . and it becomes necessary to resort to the exercise of decided discipline, it must be done."

It may be said that these opinions, though the views of bishops, are not Episcopalian law. Let us then to the law. The general canons of the "General Convention," enjoining discipline for irregular living, in the hands of the minister, subject to an appeal to the bishop, remits the providing of detailed rules to the different diocesan conventions. (Digest of Canons, 1878.) The canons of the Virginia Diocese may be taken as a fair specimen. Canon nineteenth, after authorizing the minister of the parish to repel from the Lord's table any professed Christian "conducting himself in a manner unworthy of a Christian," adds: "And gaming, attendance on horse-racing or theatrical amusements, witnessing immodest and licentious exhibitions of shows, attending public balls, etc., . . . *are offences for which discipline should be exercised.*"

But Bishop Whittle, of Virginia, wishing for still more stringent and imperative legislation against round dancing, speaks of it thus: "I adopt his" (Bishop Johns') "language as my own." Round dancing is a "dreadful evil." "Judging the tree by its fruit, our wisest and best people, ministers and laymen, have become alarmed lest its effect shall not only be to injure pure and unde-

filed religion in the church, *but even to sap the very foundations of all social virtue and morality.* I will not discuss its character and consequences. For while St. Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus that it was a shame even to speak of those things which were done by some *in secret*, I should feel ashamed even to speak, as the truth would require, of this thing which is done *openly before all.*"

The council of 1878, in response to the bishop's request, unanimously resolved that it is the "solemn duty of every communicant to abstain from round dancing; and that every minister be requested to use every effort to arrest the practice of round dancing *by admonition AND DISCIPLINE.*" Legislation, rendering this absolute by an additional "canon," is now on foot and referred to the next council.

The Papal body has not had the character of being at all a strict guardian of morals. But even American popery cannot away with the abuse. The pastoral letter of the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops in council in Baltimore in 1866 speaks thus: They consider it "their duty to warn their people, . . . especially against the fashionable dances, which, as at present carried on, *are revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest danger to morals.*"

The same council adopted the following Canon C. Choreæ dictæ "round dances" in scholis nec tolerandæ nec docendæ. "Cum PP. Conc. Balt. Plenarii II. in Literis Pastoralibus ad Populum, omnino improbarint choreas, quæ vulgo nomine 'Waltzes' et 'round dances' veniunt: statuimus illas non esse docendas et ne tolerandas quidem, in Collegiis, Academiis, et Scholis hujus Diocæseos, etiamsi recreationis tantum causa inter personas ejusdem sexus habeantur."

And the archbishop, with a nerve which shames the timidity of many a protestant, ordered the parochial clergy to withhold absolution from all such as refused to forsake these amusements.

It may be rejoined, that all the witnesses cited are human, and therefore none of them is Lord of the Christian's conscience. Let this be granted. But what shall be the presumptive estimate of the humility, modesty, and docility of that temper which sets itself up arrogantly against this *concursus* of all religions, all ages, all civilizations, to decide, in its ignorance and inexperience, in favor of what the wise and good of the ancient and

modern world have condemned? In the face of this array, the charge that the condemnation of dancing is only puritanical or self-righteous is simply silly. Whether this opinion of the virtuous of all ages be sound or not, it is clear that the self-sufficiency and arrogance of mind which rejects it under the plea of asserting its Christian liberty, is the farthest possible from that righteous and reverent, God-fearing, and humble temper which should animate the champion of the holy rights of conscience, especially when constrained to contend against God's own church.

But it is by no means conceded that this condemnation of public dancing is without scriptural warrant, and sustained only by ecclesiastical opinion. Few practices, which have become current since Bible days, are so fully and expressly condemned by the Bible as is this. No competent archæologist will risk his credit by denying the following facts: that modern dancing, *i. e.*, the dancing of free males and females together for amusement, was unknown in the decent society of the Jews (as of the ancient heathen); that the only dancing mentioned with allowance in the Bible was religious, choral movements, in which the sexes always danced alone, and that the dancing of females for amusement in a male presence, like that of Herodias' daughter, was uniformly recognized as too notoriously indecent to need any new condemnation. Hence all attempted use of the Bible cases as precedents for modern dancing are simply preposterous. And that the canon of Scripture should close without any additional prohibition, in express words, of our modern dancing, is exactly according to that plan by which God has legislated for his church in all other points of modern sin. Why is it that no church session, if called to discipline a man for the trespass of wantonly cutting a telegraph wire, or the crime of displacing a railroad bar in front of a passenger train, would expect to find a prohibition in express words against these forms of sin? Every child knows the answer: because telegraphs and railroads had not then been invented, and God's uniform plan is not to place on the page of the Bible, in Bible times, precepts which must be wholly unintelligible to the generation to which the Bible was given. But his plan was, so to prohibit sins which were current in those generations as to furnish all honest minds parallels and precedents which would safely guide them in classing the sins

of later invention. The position here assumed is, that *the Bible has condemned the modern dance* as expressly as the plan of its revelation made possible for it. For—

1. The Bible enjoins on Christians sobriety; the dance is an act of pronounced levity. The Bible morality is not ascetic, but it is distinctly sedate. It summons us to regard ourselves and our fellow-men as invested with the dignity of immortality; as engaged in a momentous struggle for our own salvation and for the rescue of a perishing generation of fellow-men; as bought for God with divine blood; as at strife with spiritual adversaries of mighty power; as waging this warfare in the presence of a world of men, of angels, and of God. The Bible commends cheerfulness, but forbids frivolity and levity. It allows recreations, but it limits them to such bounds as refit the powers for the serious duties of life, or such as are compatible with the solemn warfare we wage. Let any obedient mind, from this point of view, compare the numerous places where this *σωφροσύνη* is positively enjoined.¹ To appreciate the meaning which the Spirit meant to put into this precept, we must consider the meaning which the usage of the age attached to the quality. According to that usage, all such levities as the dancing of a virtuous free-born man for amusement were outrages on that *αἰδώς*, that sense of dignity and decency of person, the absence of which was a shame and disgrace.

2. The Bible enjoins on Christians strict economy. They are stewards of their riches for God. They must use their superfluity to do good in the spirit of that Redeemer “who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor.”² But the modern dance is a wasteful and expensive amusement, wasteful of time, of money, of dress, of equipage and furniture, and most mischievously hindering industrial pursuits. Is it said that modern Christian society indulges in many other expensive amusements besides the ball? This is deplorably true; but the answer is that “two wrongs do not make a right.” All of those expensive amusements are unscriptural and unchristian; God calls for the retrenchment of all. But it would be a sorry method to pursue that important result by sanctioning one of the most obtrusive and fruitful sources of this sinful waste. He who looks around and comprehends the vast destitutions appealing to Christian

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 9, 15; iii. 2; 2 Tim. i. 7; Titus ii. 12; 1 Peter iv. 7.

² Luke xi. 41; xii. 33; 2 Cor. viii. 7; ix. 6; 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

charity, he who sees our young missionaries detained from the open doors God has set before them among the perishing heathen, he who hears the imploring but vain appeals of our committees for aid, and then sees God's money, in the hands of his stewards, lavished on the mischievous prodigalities of balls and other fashionable pomps, can appreciate somewhat the greatness of this element of sin. It is as expressly anti-scriptural as the word of God can make it.

3. It has been already remarked that a practice must be viewed in the concrete and with its usual adjuncts in order to make a just moral appraisal of it. The modern dance is anti-scriptural again, because it dictates usually a mode of dress in females which the word condemns. Paul¹ expressly requires Christian females to "adorn themselves in modest apparel" (ἐν καταστολῇ κοσμίῳ). How much this meant, this raiment seemly and decent for woman, must be learned from a proper understanding of the meaning which virtuous opinion in Paul's day attached to the words. The unlearned Bible reader may see what this was from 1 Cor. xi. 4-10. We there see that, according to that standard which is enjoined on the Christian female, she who appeared in public unveiled—not to say with parts of her person exposed which delicacy should have most jealously guarded—disparaged the honor of her sex by an unnatural transgression.

4. The Scriptures expressly forbid the modern dance, in that they enjoin the strictest purity in the intercourse of the sexes.² Here we approach very delicate ground. But as our citations showed, it is one which the church and its pastors have always and everywhere felt constrained by duty to assume in resisting the sin. Its defenders not seldom resent this objection to their practice as an indelicate and libellous assault. They endeavor to cry shame upon the construction which experience places on their indulgences. But one thing is clear; if the candid and plain description of the adjuncts of the modern dance would demand words whose utterance would be an outrage to the decencies of debate, then this is the strongest possible proof that *the doing* is still more an outrage upon the decencies of Christian morals. We have seen above a Christian, as pure as he is brave, confess that the personal modesty he cherished as a man disqualified him for expressing in words the adjuncts of the fash-

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 9; 1 Peter iii. 3-5. ² 1 Tim. v. 2.

ionable dances. He could have selected no words which implied so severe and just a censure of them. The Christian physician is sometimes obliged to uncover a fatal ulcer in order to excise it. But he may do it with a hand as chaste as that which lays his benediction on an infant's brow. So the spiritual surgeon may be under obligation to probe, and in probing expose, the moral impurity which his sanctity would fain hide. But the duty may be performed with sanctity. It may be modestly claimed that if any place is suitable for such exposure, it is especially the page of a professional journal which is designed for the teachers and rulers of the church, and not for the popular assemblage of families.

The attempt has been often made to break the force of the precedents cited from sacred and secular antiquity, by saying that the usages of those days were dictated by that jealous seclusion of women which Christianity has banished as a remnant of barbarism. And we are reminded that, as there is a legitimate union of the sexes, there may be a legitimate scope in social intercourse for the disclosure of the emotions which approximate them to each other. Such is the intimated plea. Now it is conceded that Christianity has elevated woman, in freeing her from that ancient state in which she was, while unmarried, half a slave and half a prisoner. It is conceded that the intercourse of the sexes in domestic society refines both, as long as it is retained within scriptural bounds; and that it is necessary to found Christian marriage in the mutual knowledge, respect, and friendship of the parties. It is admitted that God, in his laws, always assigns somewhere a legitimate scope to those affections which, in his creative handiwork, he made constitutive of our nature. But since man's fall he teaches us that every one of these affections must be restrained. Now it is the clear teaching of Scripture that the special emotions which approximate the sexes can have no innocent or lawful existence, except between those who desire to be united by them in that sacred union which makes of the twain one flesh. That union is the institution ordained by God in paradise as the means of "seeking a godly seed," consecrated to the high and holy purpose of surrounding young immortals with the safeguards which will fit them for heaven. It is the selected type of the eternal union of Christ to his ransomed Church. Hence its affections must re-

main unique, and must be sacredly directed towards or confined to the enclosure of the consecrated type. Anything else than this is pollution. From this scriptural position it follows, that in the common social intercourse of the unmarried everything is to be retrenched which has a regular tendency to develop, promiscuously, sentiments which can have lawfully but one single direction. Clear as this deduction is, we are not left to deduction, but have the sure word of Scripture. The rule enjoined on Timothy, 1 Epistle, v. 2, is: "Treat the younger women as sisters, with all purity." Now, first, while it is conceded that a breach of propriety by a young minister would carry heavier aggravations of guilt, it is false and absurd to allow to the young layman a different rule of morals. The rule then is, that young Christian males and females are, in their general social intercourse, *to exclude all the peculiar sentiments of the sexes, just as completely as they are excluded between virtuous brothers and sisters.* The apostle teaches us the stimulation of those sentiments towards the common female acquaintance is, while less criminal, as distinctly unlawful. See also for confirmation, Prov. v. 17-18; 1 Tim. ii. 9; 1 Pet. iii. 2-5; Matt. v. 28.

Does any one exclaim that our Christian society is exceeding far below this standard in many other things besides dancing: in modes of dress, in manners and intercourse? And that therefore we cannot justly condemn dancing while we allow the other departures? If the statement is true, then it proves, not that we are to legitimate dancing, but that we are to reform all the other licenses along with it. Our Saviour's word concerning such reform of a prominent abuse is clear: "This ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone." Again, should the averment be true, then the state of facts proves, not that the standard laid down above from the Scriptures is unreasonable, but perhaps it may prove that we are, indeed, far gone from that high Christian state on which it is so pleasant to plume ourselves, and that we may be, in God's eyes, in a deplorable state of decadence and corruption. What way is there for safely settling this question except a comparison of our ways with God's word?

The impulses of human acts are usually complex. To the less objectionable dances of a former generation, young people may have been prompted in part by the mere animal love of

motion which leads the lamb to skip and the school-boy to leap. Some found another impulse in the love of music. Many were impelled by the tyranny of fashion, by the fear of being taunted as "wall flowers," or of being reproached as puritans. Many moved under a love of excitement which they did not stop to analyze. In some at least, less innocent emotions prompted the exercise. In the modern dances it is simple folly to deny the presence of a stronger tendency towards the evil elements of attraction. Now, the complexity of the impulse could not but deceive, especially the inconsiderate and inexperienced dancer, as to the nature of his own emotions. He felt, but did not analyze. This admission may on the one hand greatly palliate the error of the inconsiderate dancer, and may give us the pleasing ability to exculpate him personally from conscious corruption. But on the other hand, *it only places the practice in a more objectionable light by so much as it shows it deceitful and treacherous as a stimulus of evil.* From this point of view, one easily sees how futile it is to quote the declarations of a few inexperienced dancers as to their innocence of evil sensations, in proof of the lawfulness of the amusement. Over against this partial testimony must be placed a fearful array. It is notorious that the introduction of the waltz, less objectionable than the more recent round dances, excited in England and America the general condemnation of the world and the universal reprehension of the church. To those who are old enough to remember the verdict of the healthier sentiment, it is self-evident that any change in that verdict since is due to the sophisticating of the general conscience by the tolerance in society of the evil. Those whose experience is more recent may see a fair picture of the earlier and healthier disapprobation in Byron's poem, "The Waltz." It is replete with his keenest and bitterest satire. The amusement is by innuendo charged with the worst possible tendencies. He intimates that nothing but the deplorable relaxation in the fashionable world, resulting from the example of the fourth George when Prince Regent, and the force of his personal example, could have made it possible to domesticate the abominable innovation in British society. In his view the waltzer had tarnished all the purity and delicacy which make woman attractive :

"At once love's most enduring thought resign,
To press the hand so pressed by none but thine ;
To gaze upon that eye which never met

Another's ardent look without regret.
 Approach the lip which all, without restraint,
 Come near enough—if not to touch—to taint !
 If such thou lovest, love her then no more."

Byron, it is well known, was far from a saint. If even his gross mind was thus impressed by the new amusement, what is the judgment which Christian purity must pass upon it? And if we may receive these verses of Goethe as an expression of German sentiment, the waltz was no more justified in the land of its origin than here :

"What? The girl of my heart by another embraced?
 What? The balm of her lips shall another man taste?
 What? Touched in the whirl by another man's knee?
 What? Panting recline on another than me?
 Sir, she is yours : from the plum you have brushed the soft blue ;
 From the rose you have shaken its tremulous dew—
 What you touched you may take ; pretty waltzer, adieu !"

He must be verdant indeed who can defend the round dance from the charge of impurity, after he is made aware of the feelings avowed by its unblushing male votaries. Let the participants of the other sex be as innocent as a vestal of the infection, that innocency does not remove the loathing which the delicate mind should feel for the unconscious association. Nor, in view of the fact that God forbids our making ourselves unnecessarily the occasions of sin to others, does it remove the guilt. Again, it is well known that men who join in these dances with females for whom they care nothing, usually express the greatest repugnance to seeing their own sisters imitate their example. Why is this? Because these men know the true nature of the amusement. The argument is trite but just, that the real secret source of the excitement is disclosed by the fact that round dances of men with men, and women with women, possess no attraction. In view of these stubborn facts, and the fearful testimony of the police of our large cities as to the sources whence the denizens of the house of her whose "feet go down to death and whose steps take hold on hell" are recruited, the denial of evil tendency in this practice can appear as only the blindness of prejudice and folly. Should any reputable father detect a man, who had no other rights than those of a stranger or at most of a common acquaintance, in such relations to the person of his daughter in the parlor as attend the round dance, he would unquestionably regard it as an outrage upon the honor of his house,

which, if Christian forbearance did not hold his hand, would be washed out in blood.

But now we ask, first, how does publicity modify an indecent act except by aggravating it? Second, can such an act, intrinsically immoral, be changed in its character by the attachment of any frivolous adjunct? Would a judge at law, for instance, in a commonwealth which made duelling by its laws a crime, dream of justifying the duellist because the perpetration of his murder was accompanied with a graceful Pyrrhic dance? With what scorn would the righteous magistrate dismiss so impudent a plea! Why then shall the Christian moralist modify his reprobation of that which, when done without accessories, would be condemned by all as unchaste; because, forsooth, tyrannical fashion has attached to it her frivolous adjuncts of music and rhythmical motion? The demand is an insolence.

It is therefore without a shadow of ground that a lack of express law for applying the corrective of discipline is asserted either of the Bible or of our constitution. Let any church session bring charges, not against the music and motion, but against *the postures* of the round dance, and they would find express authority in the Larger Catechism, Questions 138, 139. The impropriety which would be admitted by all, if perpetrated without those adjuncts, cannot be excused by them. Hence if the court should, in tenderness to the offender, refrain from stating its charge in terms fully equal to the grossness of the real act, and speak of it as "round dancing," it is hard to see how a culprit otherwise clearly condemned by our law can acquire any rights of justification from this undeserved forbearance.

5. The Scripture has virtually included the modern dance in an express prohibition in three places, Rom. xiii. 13, Gal. v. 21, 1 Peter iv. 3, where it sternly inhibits the *zōmōi* of the heathen. In the first text it is rendered "rioting," and in the other two "revellings." These words now fail to convey to the English reader the real nature of the sin. "Rioting" suggests some such violent insurrection against law as is put down by reading the riot act, or by an armed police; while "revellings" suggest lavish and intemperate amounts of eating. The *zōmōi* of the Greeks was wholly another matter: the *comissatio* of the Latins. This was a general frolic or jollification, following the *δᾶπνον* or *cena*, usually pursued within the house of the host. Its spirit and na-

ture may be inferred from the "walking honestly," εὐσχημόνως, of Rom. xiii. 13, with which the *zōmos* is contrasted. *Εὐσχημοσύνη* was that sedate dignity and seemliness which the gospel requires of the Lord's freedmen, the same dignity, exalted and spiritualized, which the Greek ethics exacted of the free-born citizen. The *zōmos* was condemned, partly because it was in contrast with this dignity. Cicero, in the place cited, describes the *comissatio* as an excess considerably short of dancing, and a milder preliminary usually preceding, before dissolute people got to the dancing pitch. His defence of Muræna against the infamous charge of being a dancer is that Cato could not catch him in any of these previous excesses, which alone could lead a freeman down to the final shame of dancing for social amusement. "Tu mihi arripis id, quod necesse est omnium vitiorum esse postremum: relinquis illa, quibus remotis hoc vitium omnino esse non potest. Nullum turpe convivium, non amor, non *comissatio*, non libido, non sumptus ostenditur." Now if Paul and Peter sternly inhibit the *zōmos* or *comissatio*, *a priori* they inhibited the dancing which contemporary opinion regarded as still more unworthy. No female was usually present in these jollities. But their presence and participation, had it occurred, would unquestionably have made the condemnation of the apostles just so much the sterner, because it would have outraged their moral sense in another point. But add to the ancient *comissatio* the presence of women participating as agents in the frolic, and we have precisely the modern ball, as it appears in its full fledged dissipation. The conclusion of the whole is, that in forbidding *zōmor* the Scriptures did still more forbid the modern dance.

None will be so hardy as to deny that the light of experience may properly be invoked in interpreting the preceptive principles of Scripture and applying them to existing practices. For instance, it is agreed that the Sixth Commandment forbids suicide as truly as the murder of a fellow-man; and that therefore practices destructive of mental and bodily health are criminal. (Larger Catechism, Question 136). But now the modern drug "chloral" is introduced, and it is found to be a fascinating sedative and nervine. May we then indulge in it causelessly — when not really necessary as an anæsthetic—for our gratification? *It is said*, that when habitually used it fatally impairs the brain-tissue, tending to induce mental imbecility and premature death.

If this be true, its causeless, habitual use is clearly a sin under the Sixth Commandment. What is to settle the question? Now, every one will say in this case, *the light of experience must settle it*: and the experience must be chiefly that of medical observation. Now, should some caviller in this case object: "No; for that would be to clothe the doctors with power over my conscience, which is a species of popery;" it would cost no person of common sense any trouble to explode the cavil by saying: *God's word has decided the principle* of the duty of abstinence; the doctors are merely referred to as to a question of fact. And if what they state is a fact, then the rash fool who persists in saying, against the light of a sufficient experience, "I don't believe that any amount of chloral will hurt me; these doctors shall not make my conscience for me," must even bear the penalty of his own sinful obstinacy. This parallel receives an easy application. There is no question but experience proves the tendencies of modern dancing to be, not in every case, but in ordinary cases, unhealthy for body and soul. Medical experience has lately been cited, from the over-pampered and luxurious society of one of our cities, to testify that it was not unhealthy. Of such subjects this may be relatively true, that is, even so ill-judged an exercise as that of the ball-room may be found not as bad for the health as the pampered indolence in which such people would otherwise exist. But this admission does not at all detract from the truth that the practice is of unhealthy tendency. Other and more trustworthy medical authority testifies that modern dancing is most deleterious. Unseasonable hours, an atmosphere over-heated and vitiated, the glare of lights, the imprudent and unseasonable raiment, the unhealthy food, the excessive social excitement prompting over-exertion, all indisputably concur to make it anything but a safe recreation. An old physician, looking on a gay dance, said: "This will be worth — dollars to me." The prediction was exactly verified, with the addition of the death of two young people from pneumonia. It is a vain attempt, in the presence of experiences like these, for thoughtlessness to dismiss the warning of prudence.

Experience proves the tendency of the modern dance to be yet more unhealthy for the soul. Is one and another "dancing Christian" obtruded as an instance of lively religious zeal? The answer is: "One swallow does not make a summer." These

facts are well known: that it is not usually the spiritually-minded people who are the dancing members; that a dancing minister would shock even the most worldly sentiment; that at the approach of a revival dancing always ceases; that the world claims the amusement as its own. What is the meaning of these facts? The familiar association with the ungodly on their own ground, the levity, the intoxicating excitement, the bustle and glare, cannot but quench the holy and silent motions of God's Spirit and exhale the dew of his graces.

It has been conceded that all evil acts are not properly disciplinable by the visible church. Advantage is taken of this admission to argue that dancing should be disapproved, reasoned against, and admonished, but not disciplined. One plea for this untenable position is, that it is admitted that there are forms of dancing which are innocent, and since the different kinds shade off into each other by nice gradations, and since the Bible has not drawn a line between the tolerated and the disciplinable forms of the practice, all the church can rightfully do is to remonstrate and instruct. The answer is, that by the same logic one might prove that no breach of any commandment is disciplinable. The lesser and greater breaches of all of them shade off into each other. Who doubts that a plain breach of the Third Commandment by cursing or swearing should be disciplined? But there are expletives and exclamations heedlessly uttered by truly good people, which are against the spirit of that commandment in that they depart from our Saviour's law: "Let your yea be yea, and your nay nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Breaches of the Ninth Commandment are certainly disciplinable. But a Christian youth might, in a thoughtless moment, utter a quiz. Now to make these faults grounds of judicial censure, without other provocation, might be neither wise nor just. Shall we argue thence that the rod of discipline cannot reach lying and profanity? No one claims this. Then the existence of such gradations in dancing cannot prove that the grosser forms of the practice may not be disciplined.

The reader has a right to ask this objector, who says he wholly disapproves dancing but does not deem it disciplinable, how he found out that it is to be disapproved. May not a church session ascertain its evil in the same valid way in which he has? He stickles much for the principle that none but God can make

an act a sin. How then did the objector convince himself so clearly that dancing is to be disapproved? Has he committed the error which he is so jealous of in the church court, that of judging his fellow-creature's conduct by some merely human standard?

When men plead that there are other sinful amusements than this, and that a pharisaic professor may not dance, and yet may commit much greater sin by tattling, censoriousness, covetousness, the answer is too plain to need restatement. The conscientious Christian should forsake dancing and also these other forms of evil. If it be charged that church courts are partial, even though dancing be conceded to be evil, in directing their discipline so exclusively against this, while much greater sins go unwhipped of justice, then all that can be inferred is, not that the court erred in exerting its authority in the one case, but that it erred in failing to exert it in the many other cases. It needs to go, not backward, but forward; not to begin conniving at this one form of evil, but to cease conniving at all the other forms.

But there is a truth usually overlooked which justifies special watchfulness and jealousy touching these worldly and sinful conformities. It is that they practically lie so near the dividing line between the penitent and the ungodly. When two rival kingdoms touch each other geographically, the boundary line is but a mark. A portion of the territory of the one, although as really foreign soil to the other as though it were in the centre of its own realm, must be within a single inch of the line, and so within an inch of the other's ground. However sharply the boundary may be defined and established, this remains true. One result is that the king of either side takes much more pains to defend his frontier than his interior; his fortresses are built and his guards paraded almost exclusively along the outer edge, next his foreign and hostile neighbor's territory. By the same reason, it is unavoidable and right that in Christ's kingdom the frontier ground which borders upon the territory of Satan's kingdom, the sinful world, should be more jealously guarded. Practically, that is the region where the citizens of the spiritual kingdom suffer incursions and are exposed to danger. The officers of that kingdom would be derelict to their duty if they did not bestow special watch at these points. Thoughtless people suppose

that the noise made by presbyters of the church against cards and dancing is prompted by nothing but their puritanical prejudice; that being determined from censoriousness and pride to be "righteous overmuch," they pitch on these practices as their "pet horrors." But that this is entirely short-sighted appears from the simple view just given. Since the rival kingdoms are both together in this one world, this nearness of the contemninous domains must always exist, it matters not what may be the practices prevalent. It must be so in all ages and states of manners. Were the world to agree so utterly to desert cards and dancing that its votaries and worldly Christians should both forget them, the general truth would recur. The contest would inevitably revive about other questionable worldly practices, and the same jealousy and watch would become obligatory upon the guardians of the church.

Another truth follows from this view: that however sharply the boundary line may be drawn between the hostile kingdoms, practically, the belt of land next the frontier must be "debatable land" as to its perils. Hence the man who desires to pay a righteous regard to his own safety will avoid occupying the space very near the boundary, even though he may believe that it belongs to his own king. His actual peril is about as great as though he were over the line. Let us suppose that a western cattle farmer should insist that he knew exactly where the line between the territories of the United States and Mexico ran, even to an inch; that he was legally entitled to "preëempt" any United States lands; and that therefore he should claim his rights and place his farm-house within an inch of the Mexican line. All this might be very true; and yet when the lawless Comanches harried his home, he would become convinced that he had been very foolish and criminal. The analogy is just. The Christian who is successfully assaulted by Satan is the one who causelessly ventures near his boundary line. Usually men do not backslide by suddenly falling into some large and clearly acknowledged crime. *Nemo repente turpissimus*. To change the figure: Satan does not attempt to rend a soul away from Christ by inserting the blunt of his wedge between them first. The thin edge is insinuated. It is *because it is thin*, because the crevice first made by its introduction is very narrow, that it is adapted to do its deadly work. Because this is generally true,

Christians are morally bound to guard themselves most against the smaller sins lying next the debatable zone; and those who watch for souls are bound to be most wakeful and strict in the same points.

This conclusive argument would hold thoroughly upon the ground asserted by the palliators of dancing, that it is a slight sin. But that ground is by no means admitted, as to all forms of the practice. We believe that round dancing, at least, is a sin of a very grave character, and a flagrant breach of morals, such as cannot but rapidly debauch the conscience and choke the spiritual life.

The reasonable inquirer will now be ready to concede that if some forms of dancing have been proved sinful by the former part of this discussion, then such dancings are clearly disciplinable offences. They have every mark by which disciplinable sins are discriminated from the undisciplinable. They are public sins. Their commission is overt. The acts may be clearly defined. They are, notoriously, attended by scandal. They have regular tendencies to other sins. Above all, if the testimony of pastors and elders may be believed, the milder measures of instruction and remonstrance fail to restrain the irregularity of many. In such a state of the case, when the purity and authority of the church are wantonly provoked and defied by the continuance of *a practice confessedly needless* and non-obligatory, in spite of her solemn and tender entreaties, the claim, that the offenders may not be touched with the rod of discipline, savors more of sinful audacity than of righteous zeal for freedom of conscience. Our Assemblies, in 1869 and 1877, have distinctly declared that some forms of dancing are not only reprehensible, but disciplinable. We have seen that the authorities of all the other denominations, even those farthest from puritanism, treat the practice as disciplinable.

It has been argued that a session may not discipline any form of dancing, no matter how gross, because the records of our church courts contain *no precedents* of such cases. Is it demonstrated that they do not? When the statute law exists, as in the decisions of 1869 and 1877, no precedents are necessary. The demand for a precedent is absurd. The first precedent could only arise by the legitimate exercise, by some church court, of the power to discipline in some first case. But this

preposterous argument would require a precedent before the first precedent to justify the use of the power! Let us suppose that when railroads were first constructed, our Assemblies had seen a stolidity and perversity of conscience among the people, such as required a declarative enactment to this effect, viz., that the displacement of a rail for the purpose of throwing a passenger train off the track is a breach of the Sixth Commandment, and must be disciplined as such. According to this notable argument, this most clear and righteous rule must remain a dead letter until after a precedent had arisen, which, on the terms of the argument, could never arise. Should it then prove the case, that the declarative enactments of Assemblies have made gross forms of dancing disciplinable? that such forms do prevail, and yet no precedent of their discipline exists? the only reasonable inference is, that our church courts have been too long derelict to solemn duty, and that they should reform their delinquency at once.

It has been supposed that the rights of conscience are involved in this discipline. Some have taken the ground that nothing can be justly disciplined except what is expressly condemned by God; others, assuming a less extravagant ground, say, that the interpretative powers of church courts can never inhibit any practice, under any circumstances, which cannot be proved by Scripture to be forever and under all circumstances *malum per se*. And it is further claimed, that whenever an individual judges that his own church courts have in any thing exceeded these restrictions, it is his right and duty to assert his freedom of conscience by doing the thing inhibited. To separate the error mingled with the truth here, let this series of statements be considered, which all Presbyterians will accept without cavil:

"God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship."

"All church power . . . is only ministerial and declarative; . . . and all decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God." (Gov., Chap. 1, Secs. I. and VII.)

"The whole counsel of God concerning . . . man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture." (Conf. of Faith, Chap. 1, Sec. VI.)

"Every Christian church is entitled to declare the terms of admission to its own communion," etc. "In the exercise of this right they may, notwithstanding, err,

in making the terms of communion too lax or too narrow ; yet even *in this case they do not infringe upon the liberty or the rights of others, but ONLY MAKE AN IMPROPER USE OF THEIR OWN.*"

If the erroneous term of communion forbids a positive permanent duty, or commands an act which is sin *per se*, then the conscientious dissentient has no discretion : he must resist it at once and utterly. But if the act in question is only "beside" and not "against Scripture," then his course is to be modified by circumstances.

The adult member seeking admission to a Christian church is responsible for informing himself as to that understanding of scriptural terms of communion on which its previous members have expressly agreed among themselves as their known constitution ; and he is justly presumed, when he voluntarily applies for membership therein, to have approved those terms, and to covenant with his brethren to keep them. He is therefore bound, as for himself, by his own act to keep all those rules, unless he afterwards discovers any of them to be unscriptural in such sense that he may not righteously comply with them. But in this case also, his voluntary covenant binds him to vindicate his conscience, not by remaining in the communion and disobeying its agreed rules, but by peacefully withdrawing to some other church, whose terms he believes scriptural. Should he wish to exercise his right of seeking, inside the church of his first choice, the amendment of the rule which he once covenanted to observe, but now finds to be unscriptural, common honesty requires him to promote that amendment, not by the breach of the rule while it yet subsists, which is factious and of bad faith, but by moving and arguing for the change in the ways provided by the church constitution. If the dissentient is an officer in the church, such factious conduct is a still more indecent breach of faith.

Each man must be his own judge, in the fear of God, on every question, whether a church rule is scriptural or not ; and on that question the courts of the church must not come between his conscience and God by assuming to decide for him that the rule is scriptural.

But *neither has this dissentient a right to come between the consciences of the majority and God*, when they decide that the rule he regards as unscriptural is scriptural, and that it shall there-

fore remain the rule of their communion. He has his inalienable right of withdrawal; but he has no more right to dictate his judgment to them, against their conscientious judgment, than they have to punish his conscientious dissent with fine or imprisonment. In this case, even if it be conceded for illustration's sake, that he is right and the majority wrong, "they have not infringed upon" his rights, "but only made an improper use of their own."

In such case, where the majority make a term of communion, though not sinful yet too strict, and insist on its observance by those who voluntarily join them, they do not commit the sin of popery, neither do they make a papal assault on liberty of conscience. This appears from two differences: they do not claim any right to coerce acquiescence in what they judge according to the mind of God, by civil pains and penalties; neither do they declare submission to and communion with them essential to salvation. The nature of their error is only this: that they blunder in their interpretation of God's will on the point involved in their rule, and impair causelessly the comfort or edification of their brethren who judge with and adhere to them.

Actions which the Scripture does not make *sins per se*, either by expressly setting them down as such, or by good and necessary consequence, may, by reason of circumstances, be not for edification. Then the law of love should prompt every Christian to forego those actions for his weak brethren's sake. But of the duty of foregoing these acts, or of the call uttered by the law of love, each one must judge, in the fear of God, in his own Christian liberty. For, were the church court to usurp that decision, and enforce their view of it by church discipline, as a universal obligatory rule on their members, they would thus indirectly attain that power of making a thing to be sin which God did not make sin; which Christ has inhibited to all human authorities.

But once more: the maxim, that "circumstances alter cases," has an ethical application. That is, actions which, under certain circumstances, were morally neutral, may, by a change of circumstances, become truly sins. Seth's marriage to his own sister must have been allowable. In the days of Moses the changed conditions of the human race made such a marriage the sin of incest. Under the Mosaic manners, a "bill of divorce-

ment" to a newly espoused wife was in a certain case allowable; in our Saviour's and our times, it would be the sin of adultery. If this is so, then for a Christian to claim his liberty of conscience to continue that act, now become actually sinful, would be license, and not spiritual liberty.

May a church then, after the completion of the canon of Scripture, assume to declare that circumstances have now made some act sinful in itself which Christ or his apostles had left allowable? No; this would be a violation of spiritual liberty, and a claim of an uninspired and fallible body to change his infallible legislation. That a church may justly prohibit a practice as evil by reason of newly arising circumstances, it must be able to prove from Scripture, either by express declaration of good and necessary consequence, that God regards the practice thus circumstanced as evil. An instance in point may be imagined. Our Assemblies, while scripturally condemning drunkenness, have scripturally refused to make temperate drinking an offence. Hence, no presbytery may enforce total abstinence on its ministers, by the plea that their temperate drinking *may become* a temptation to excess to others. But here is a town, in which is a drinking-hell that is proved to be a regular occasion of drunkenness to many. A Presbyterian minister residing in that town habitually exercises his right of temperate drinking in public in that drinking-hell; and it is duly proved that this his example does occasion the fall of unwary persons into the sin of drunkenness, and the name of Christ into scandal. Can the presbytery restrain that minister by its ecclesiastical authority? Every man's common sense answers at once that it can. By what rule? Not by enacting that temperate drinking, which Christ had left allowable, has now become sin; but by enforcing Christ's own rule, that Christians must not "let their good be evil spoken of." The presbytery would leave him his Christian liberty of temperate drinking under other circumstances, but it would teach him to distinguish between this right and the sin of causelessly misleading souls. (See Conf. of Faith, Chap. XX., Sec. 4.)

But the Scripture furnishes us with a better instance. About the fifty-second year of Christ, Jewish Christians felt themselves scandalized by several things which were seen among some Gentile converts to Christ. One was, that they entered the church

without circumcision; another, that they ate articles of food which had before been offered to idols; another was, that they ate flesh with the blood, as things strangled; and another, that some continued to practice unchastities which pagan morals had long justified. The apostles and elders met to settle the dispute. See Acts xv., xvi. 4; Rom. xiv. 2, 17; 1 Cor. viii. 8, x. 25; Titus i. 15. They decided, with the authority of the Holy Ghost (Acts xv. 28), that circumcision was not incumbent on the Gentile believers; that all forms of fornication must be jealously avoided; and that two practices, in themselves indifferent (see Rom. xiv. 14; 1 Cor. viii. 4, x. 25)—eating things which had been before offered to false gods, and eating the flesh with the blood—must be temporarily forbidden and forborne. The propriety of this latter part of the rule is grounded on these circumstances (see Acts xv. 21): that Gentiles were almost everywhere united in Christian communion with believing Jews; that these Jewish Christians were still observing the Mosaic ritual and synagogue worship of the seventh day, just as they had for ages; that during the transition stage from the old to the new dispensation this was legitimate for Jewish believers (see Acts xxi. 20–24); that according to the Mosaic point of view, blood was sacredly set apart from all common uses to the sacrificial, and whoever “ate of a sacrifice [1 Cor. x. 18] was partaker of the altar;” whence the indulgence of Gentile brethren in these must unavoidably scandalize Hebrew Christians, and break the peace of the church. For this reason it was necessary to enforce the two prohibitions temporarily, so long as the transition stage lasted.

It has been attempted to argue, that these two points were not enjoined by apostolic and presbyterial authority, but only recommended. The plea is, that Paul, notwithstanding the decision, circumcised Timothy; and that in the Epistles he gave the Gentile converts full liberty to eat if they saw fit. Of the latter, we shall enquire anon. To the former, it is a sufficient reply to distinguish between enforcing circumcision on Gentiles and permitting the circumcision of one who was half a Jew by blood, and who had been reared as an orthodox member of the old dispensation in all else than circumcision. When Pharisaic men *demand*ed the circumcision of Titus, a Gentile—the very thing forbidden by the synod at Jerusalem—Paul had scrupu-

lously anticipated the Synod's subsequent decree, and refused the exaction. But to grant circumcision to Timothy, from prudential reasons, was not a transgression of the synod's decree. They had only forbidden the exacting of it of Gentiles. The attentive reader of the history will hardly doubt but that these other points of duty were positively enjoined. The Apostle James says (Acts xv. 19), "My sentence is" (ἐγὼ κρίνω); 28, "It seemed good (ἔδοξεν) to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you" this "*burden*." The burden is "these *necessary* things." Acts xvi. 4: Paul himself "delivered them" (the Gentiles) "the decrees *for to keep*, that were ordained of the apostles and elders" (τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκρυμμένα). Acts xxi. 25: The apostles remind Paul—after the Epistles to the Romans and First Corinthians had been written, in A. D. 60—"As touching the Gentiles which believe, *we have written and concluded*," etc., (ἡμεῖς ἐπιστείλαμεν κρίναντες, etc). How could more authoritative terms be used? It is incredible that Paul should have set himself to infringe a rule which was thus legislated by the apostles, in his presence, with his concurrence, and to meet a state of facts reported by himself as brought about chiefly by his own labors. Hence the exegesis of the Epistles must be erroneous which represents him as authorizing his converts to disregard a δόγμα κεκρυμμένον, a "*necessary*" obligation "*laid on them*" by God's Holy Spirit, with his own concurrence.

From the historical point of view, the true exposition of those passages is very obvious. It is not necessary to detain the reader with citations and verbal criticisms; he can compare the three passages (Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii. and x.) for himself. He will see that the apostle, in thorough consistency with the Synod of Jerusalem and with himself, asserts all along these points: that the Jewish law of meats being positive and ritual, any food was, *per se*, indifferent; that idols, being nonentities, no real effect could be wrought on the flesh which had been on their altars, so that to the believer who understood this fact, it was, *per se*, as any other meat; that yet, if a man indulged his appetite, while himself doubtful of the lawfulness of his indulgence, it would be sin to him, not because the meat was defiled, but because his act was a tampering with possible sin according to his own judgment; that if the man's own mind were clear, and no scandal arose, such eating would be lawful. But if such

eating were attended with scandal, then it became unlawful, not because the food was defiled, or the act *sin per se*, but because self-indulgence in a needless gratification was preferred to a brother's safety and salvation. On this last point Paul dwells. It is evidently the turning-point of the duty of abstinence. It is evidently on this point that he justifies the Synod of Jerusalem—whose “dogma” he had himself given to the churches “*to keep*”—in forbidding, under certain circumstances, what they admitted to be indifferent. Rom. xiv. 20: “But *it is evil* to that man who eateth with offence” (ζαζόν). 1 Cor. viii. 12: “But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, *ye sin against Christ*,” x. 32, “Give none offence.” It is the *πρόσομμη* attending the act, otherwise indifferent, which makes it sinful. It should be observed that the “offence” arose in this way: the “weak brother” who witnessed the eating, not comprehending the eater's more enlightened view, really regarded him as in the act doing homage to an idol. Had the “weak brother” understood that the eater only considered himself as doing the allowable act of satisfying hunger, the former could not have seen in it a just occasion of offence. When that result is experimentally ascertained, the precept is as positively “Eat not,” as any other Christian precept. But this scandal is precisely the ground assigned by the Apostle James for his vote in the Synod.

We thus have an unquestionable instance of a church court which, under the teachings of the Holy Spirit, declared that the moral character of a concrete act, the form of which might be, *per se*, indifferent, may be changed, at least for a time, by circumstances. It may be said, the canon was not then closed; and they had the infallible guidance of inspiration in thus declaring. The just reply is, that a supreme church court still has the infallible guidance of the Bible principle—“It is evil to that man who doeth the indifferent act with offence”—to direct it in parallel declarations; and unless that principle clearly sustains it, it should not venture on them.

But, supposing a well-informed believer had persisted in eating, and had declared that he did so regarding an idol “as nothing,” and had urged the question: “Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?” Would Paul have disciplined him for this act alone? We suppose not; the man

would have been left to his own conscience, with the warning, "Now walkest thou not charitably." He is clearly sinning; but there are clear sins which yet are not proper subjects for human discipline. Should that man prosecute his selfish act under circumstances which proved demonstrably that he was not defending his conscience, but acting selfishly and mischievously of deliberate purpose, then he would come under discipline, not merely for eating, but for wantonly doing mischief.

The establishment of these views is not really necessary to prove round dances unlawful and disciplinable in Christ's church. For they are never *per se* indifferent, but essentially contrary to the permanent precepts of Scripture, as has been shown. But it was judged best to settle these points of exposition, because the misconception of them has tempted some to push the claim of Christian liberty much farther than Scripture allows.

To one who places himself in the point of view of the Westminster Assembly, and of the American General Assembly which adopted our constitution, there is no doubt whatever, but that they would have included the modern round dances under the forbidden term "lascivious dances." But "the meaning of the law is the law." In their day, the society which these holy men considered worldly and unchristian had not gone farther than minuets, reels, and quadrilles. When the round dances were at last introduced, in our generation, the estimate of a worldly opinion even was that they were lascivious. If the decent part of the world now wavers in that judgment, it is only because the abuse, "unwhipped of justice," and weakly connived at by Christian tribunals, has already had such disastrous power to debauch public opinion. The claim that these dances shall be acquitted of prurient tendency on the testimony of some females that they do indulge without any such consciousness, is preposterous. For, in the first place, we have shown that when the impulse is so complex, consciousness will probably fail, amidst the haste and excitement, to detect the prurient element. And second, such ambiguous testimony is fatally counterpoised by the candid declaration of the coarser sex, avowing the prurient excitement as the prime attraction to them. There is no offence against decency, save the most extreme, which might not be cleared of blame by so absurd a plea, because it is supposable

that a rash and reckless person might still aver, without conscious falsehood, that in his own case his mind was preoccupied in the perpetration of it, by the fun, or the novelty, or some accessory excitement. No ; church courts are both entitled and bound to judge practices by their overt forms, and by the tendencies which experience shows usually inhering in them. Tried in this way, round dancing certainly falls under the ban, both of the principles of Scripture and the express words of our constitution, by which we have all voluntarily covenanted to walk.

Seeing that the practice of our sessions is still timid, we are persuaded that it would be well for our next Assembly to speak out still more explicitly, and *order categorically the discipline* of all church members who are found contumacious in round dancing as practiced between men and women, or who dance in public and promiscuous balls, after any fashion of the mixture of the sexes. The latter prohibition should rest on the facts that, as the world now goes, round dances do prevail at all public balls ; and also, that the free access to them of persons disreputable, profane, intemperate, or utterly frivolous, renders them *sinful places for Christians* ; unless, like their Saviour, they go thither to carry the warnings of the gospel. And this declarative legislation the Assembly should rest squarely on the words of our Catechism, and the principles of the Bible. As to the milder forms of domestic and social dancing, we would have the presbyters of the church rely, for the present at least, on dissuasions and instructions.

No man is fit to be a presbyter in Christ's church who is capable of being intimidated from the performance of covenanted judicial duties by the strength and rampancy of an abuse. No presbyter should need to be reminded that, as a question of mere policy, it is far wiser to have a small church expurgated of worldly corruptions and clad in the beauty of holiness, than a large one weakened and crippled by dead members. But there is, we fear, reason that we should all have "searchings of heart" for our moral cowardice, in the presence of the worldly conformities which now so deface our Zion.

It is justly remarked, that a merely repressive policy, where no innocent substitute for vicious amusements is offered, may more probably repel than reform the youth of our church. There is a trait of human nature which the wise pastor should study.

We usually speak of a man as "a social being." The mass of human beings scarcely deserve so elevated a description, and should rather be termed gregarious. The gregarious instinct in them is potent. They shun solitude, and earnestly crave the *presence* of their kind; but not *converse* with their kind. For, in fact, ordinary people have not intellectual resources enough to furnish anything that deserves the name of conversation, except for a small fraction of the hours they crave to spend together. To be compelled to keep up intelligible conversation the whole time would be to them more irksome than the solitude from which they flee. Here is the true source—so far as the impulse is not vicious—of all the non-intellectual amusements. People need something which does not tax their ill-furnished minds, *which they may do together*, so as to provide for the instincts of gregariousness. This solution is verified in the case of the old housewives, who spend a long summer's day in each other's presence, with little social communion save the community of their occupation of knitting. It was verified around the planter's fire-side in former days, when children and servants pleasantly spent the long winter evening in the common task of "picking cotton." It is verified in the long *seiderunts* of whist-playing old ladies and gentlemen. The communion in the mild excitement of their game gives play to the gregarious appetency, without taxing their vacant minds for any other contribution to the mutual intercourse. The same solution accounts for a large part of the interest in the more decent dances of our fathers. Often have we seen young fellows, at social gatherings, with minds too unfurnished for sustained converse, detained in the parlors in part by good manners, and in part by the unsatisfied gregarious instinct, yet insufferably "bored." But at last the music enters, and they are immediately revived. Here now is something which they can *do in common*; a social occupation which brings them into a gregarious union, to which their heels are competent, if their heads were not.

The problem for the wise parent then should be, not overlooking this trait, to find social occupations which may satisfy it, and yet may be innocent; and which, instead of aggravating the incapacity, and leading downwards, like the dance, to deeper mental vacuity and positively vicious sentiments, may instruct while they please and unite. Might not a holy ingenuity find a suf-

ficient variety of such gregarious occupations? One suggestion is that of parlor vocal music, both social and sacred. Another is the time-honored usage of reading aloud. Let the selections vary from "grave to gay," while never coarse or demoralising; and let "them who are strong bear the infirmities of the weak," by yielding their attention in turn to the simple matter which may interest without fatiguing even the juvenile and the vacant mind. Thus the temptation to less safe amusements may be obviated, and the social hours of the young be made enjoyable, without being made dangerous.

THE SABBATH OF THE STATE.¹

THIS infidel association has been for three years vexing the public horizon as an evil portent. The publications noted below are its authoritative exponents. The moral and religious complexion of the society may be seen in these facts: that Col. Robert Ingersoll, of Illinois, is the manifest coryphæus of the whole crew; that D. M. Bennett, the chosen publisher of these and all their other documents, is at this time in prison, under a conviction of the not too scrupulous courts of the United States, for violating their statutes against sending blasphemies and obscenities through the United States mails; that the most impious and blatant atheists in the country are members; that the foulest impieties seem always to have been most applauded in their "congresses"; and that their first professed object is to drive the Bible and the Sabbath out of the land.

Another instructive feature of this agitation is, that the survivors of the original anti-slavery society, of Garrison and that ilk, now reappear in this atheistic movement, like uneasy corpses airing their unsavory persons from the grave. These, like Parker Pillsbury, and the President, Elizur Wright, expressly connect the present movement with the past, and claim for it the same success by the same means, thus verifying the truth that the abolition movement was and is essentially infidel and disorganizing. This "League" scarcely disguises its communism and its assault on property. Its arguments are the very same by which the original abolitionists assaulted the constitution and laws which protected the property of the South. Thus again is illustrated the fact that abolitionism is virtual agrarianism. The new progeny of the old heresy will, in due time, convince the anti-slavery plutocracy of New England and Britain of their folly,

¹ This article appeared in *The Southern Presbyterian Review* for January, 1880, reviewing *Circular of the "National Liberal League."* 1878. 12mo., pp. 44. D. M. Bennett, N. Y. *Third Annual Congress of the National Liberal League.* Cincinnati. 1879. Pp. 115, 12mo. D. M. Bennett, N. Y.

by showing them that the same arguments which were suited to overthrow our right to the labor of our lawful bondsmen, are equally good to destroy their rights to their lands, factories, mines, ships, warehouses, and incomes.

Another lesson impressively taught by the new movement is the perilous and destructive nature of the political philosophy now in the ascendant in this country. The philosophy of this atheists' league is precisely that briefly described in the number of this *Review* for October, 1879, as underlying the demand for the ecclesiastical and social equality of women. It seeks authority by perverting those "glittering generalities" to which the Declaration of Independence has familiarized the American ear, that "all men are by nature equal, and inalienably entitled to liberty," etc.; that "all just government is founded in the consent of the governed"; and that taxation and representation should go together. In our last number the distinction was drawn between the sense in which these propositions are true—in which they were held by the founders of our republic—and that in which they are false. There is a sense in which men are naturally entitled to liberty; that is to say, to the privilege of doing, unimpeded by civil law, all those things which they have a moral right to do. But in the sense of these radicals, with whom "liberty" means absolute independence of will to do whatever they please, no creature of God is "born free"; but all are by nature subject to his sovereign will, and to the civil, domestic and ecclesiastical authorities under which his providence has placed them. There is a sense in which all rational men are equal, which is, that, however different the specific personal rights assigned by God and the laws to the superior and inferior ranks in civil society, the inferior has an ethical title to his smaller circle of privileges, identical with the title of the superior to his larger privileges. But it is not true that, in the sense of these radicals, men are by nature equal; but they are made by God endlessly unequal in their strength, ability, energy, sex, providential position, and consequently in their natural rights. All just government is founded in the consent of the governed, in this sense, that the commonwealth as a whole has an inalienable right to choose its own political connections, rulers, and forms of administration; that when these are imposed against the will of the commonwealth in all its orders and

forms of expression, this is conclusive of their injustice. But the radical notion is, that allegiance originates in a "social contract" of individuals, so that it is unjust for a ruler to govern any soul who has not had an opportunity to vote for him. Whereas the simple fact is, that every soul is put under civil government by the ordinance of a sovereign God, without any option of his own. Radicalism holds that no one can be righteously taxed who does not vote. The founders of our states only asserted that maxim of the British constitution, that a parliament in London ought not to tax commonwealths in America which were unrepresented in it in any form.

Now, the two facts deserving of solemn attention from every thinking man are these: such is precisely the political philosophy which this "League" lays down as the basis of their whole structure, and on which they logically rear conclusions, the establishment of which would imply the utter and anarchical overthrow of American institutions; but such is also identically the philosophy of abolitionism, the philosophy implicitly held by the editors and politicians and party which have been dominant in the country for nineteen years, and which is everywhere expounded as the doctrine of Republicanism. It is the philosophy of the frantic "leveller" Lilburn, whom the enlightened founders of English liberty in the days of the Commonwealth themselves put in the pillory and the prison, while they had his book burned by the common hangman, which is now everywhere preached and accepted in this country under the name of liberty. What can come of such inculcations? Whither must the people drift who receive them without question? This radical league tells us. From this philosophy they deduce women's suffrage, agrarianism and an atheistic social order.

Another observation will strike the reader of these documents: that these abolitionists now with one mouth declare the condition of the Northern hireling laborer as far more oppressive than that of domestic slaves. Thus, p. 85, their condition is that of a "wages' slavery," under which they are "poor and down-trodden." P. 88. "The laboring classes are working under a despotism far more tyrannical than that of the slaves of the South." "The Republican party was grand enough to unshackle four millions of negro slaves; but now it is cruel enough to put these working classes under chains far more torturing than those borne

by the blacks." P. 99, "On the one hand, the bonanza or railroad king of six millions of dollars a year, bribes corrupt politicians to keep his twenty or thirty thousand white slaves in subjection by the aid of unjust laws and bayonets; and on the other, the half-starved wage-slaves exist on an average of one hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars a year." If, then, the special friends of hireling labor and apostles of abolition may be believed, all the truths uttered by Southern defenders are confirmed: that our system of labor was more humane than the hireling system substituted for it, and more promotive of the laborer's welfare; that domestic slavery was not the only form for subjecting the laborer to the will of his employer, but only one form among many, and perhaps the most philanthropic; and that the overthrow of Southern institutions would prove to be very far short of the real abolition of bondage.

But, in justice, it should be added, that the laboring classes in the United States have doubtless real grievances. Not only is it inevitable that human nature, being what it is, greedy and selfish, shall view the enormous disproportion of conditions which has grown up in this country with discontent: it is, in a certain sense, just that it should. In an ethical point of view, the disparity is illegitimate. The gains of the great capitalists are inordinate, and the luxury and waste of their living mischievous and wicked. Legislation ought not to be so framed as to make these enormous accumulations, and this more than regal luxury easy. Certain it is, that this condition of extreme inequality is not consistent with a permanent republican constitution of society. The communistic remedy will doubtless prove more fatal than the disease, especially to the poor, for whom it is pretended to be offered. But none the less does the fearful truth remain, that the present organization of society and business is impossible as a permanency, and that this vast, festering, suffering proletariat, sinking ever deeper and deeper into vice, hatred, and destitution, and sundered more and more widely from every domestic tie with the employing class, by the hireling system, is not going to coëxist peaceably beside this ruthless plutocracy, ever wresting the legislation of the country to pile up their invidious wealth higher, and to lavish it before greedy, starving eyes, more selfishly. The wealthy class in the North will be wise to read the handwriting on the wall, to moderate their aims,

and to use the wealth already acquired more wisely and humbly. Else the reign of terror will come. It will not stay, indeed; for riches and intelligence, though cautious, and in appearance cowardly, while the deadly issue is forming itself, yet always defend themselves successfully and conquer, when once it is inexorably joined. But *how* shall the fever-fit of communism pass? By the bayonet hired by riches? Or by a Christian, patriotic use of wealth, and a return to honest, equitable legislation and administration? History answers: probably not by the latter way. Then it must be ended by the former; and that means also the end of free and equal institutions, not only for the crushed proletariat, but for the whole society.

The Liberal League, while coquetting with the most outrageous communists, yet announce their "general object to be the *total separation of church and state*." They ground their movement in these facts: that the Constitution of the United States formally neither names nor recognizes any God or religion as its basis of right, and that it forbids any establishment by the government of any religion; that the most of the state constitutions are similar in this respect; and that the spirit of American institutions makes men of all religions and of no religion perfectly equal before the law. Hence they demand—

That all church property shall be taxed like other property.

That education shall be committed to the state's control, shall be compulsory and universal, and shall be absolutely secularized; and every species of religious worship and inculcation excluded from all state schools, high and low.

That the religious oath shall be utterly banished, and replaced by a simple affirmation under the penalties of perjury.

That all Sabbath laws shall be absolutely repealed, and that no restriction shall exist preventing any act of government or secular pursuit of citizens on the holy day as on any other day. And the League ostentatiously employs Sunday as the day of its most noisy meetings.

That no government, state or federal, shall concur in any religious act whatsoever, recognizing any divine government, nor have any chaplaincy, nor appropriate any money to any pious use.

That the right of free utterance, by speech and publication, and through the United States mails, shall be restored to atheists

and blasphemers, under the plea of liberty of speech and the press.

That women be invested with all the rights of voting and holding office possessed by men.

The League asserts, as its fundamental principle, that natural morals are a sufficient basis for secular society, and guarantee of public order, prosperity, and righteousness; that is to say, it proposes *to reconstruct society on a merely atheistic basis*; and claims that the sacred name of *religious liberty* authorizes their doing so.

It is evident that the issue will be practically joined with this atheistic party, first upon these two points: the secularization of all state schools, and the repeal of all Sunday laws. Our subsequent discussion will be limited, for lack of space, to the Sunday question. This, however, will raise the main principles as to the nature of free civil government, upon which the whole movement turns. The public has been familiar with the infidel argument against Sunday laws of the state. Its whole force is in the assumption that Sunday is solely a Christian institution, and should therefore be left, like baptism and church-going, to the conscience and optional preference of those who desire to observe it. They say that as the state is a purely secular and non-Christian organism, and as state and church are declared independent, and the Constitutions of the United States and the States forbid that any citizen shall be prejudiced in any way, in person or estate, on account of his religion or his non-religion, it is as unjust for the state to prevent any man's amusements or work on the Sabbath, when he believes in no Sabbath, as to fine or persecute him for his religious opinions.

This audacious argument has aroused a multitude of answers from the Christian side, some of which have not been either discreet or logical. It is obvious, at a glance, that with the atheist, the rationalistic Jew, the German infidel, and sometimes even the European Lutheran, any pious declamation concerning the reverence of our Christian fathers for the Lord's day and its supposed glories and sanctities count for nothing. If these assailants are to be silenced, it must be by other arguments than these. Some have reasoned, that the majority is entitled to rule; and because Sabbatarians are in the majority in the United States, they are entitled to make the minority respect their Sabbath. On this

ground, whenever a state shall show a majority of atheists, it will be right for that government to abolish the Sabbath. Sometimes it is argued, that there is no injustice, because the Sabbath laws lay no restriction on the doings of the infidel but such as are laid on all the citizens. If the Protestants who use this sophism lived in a popish state, where the laws compelled them to desist from legitimate labors and amusements on all those "saints' days" which we Protestants thoroughly disbelieve and despise, they would see little solace in the fact that their superstitious popish neighbors all were idle on the same days. These Protestants would find the intrinsic injustice in this, that the religious superstitions of others were made a pretext to restrain them, who believed them false and groundless, from acts to which they were naturally and morally entitled. This is precisely the ground assumed by our infidels against Sabbath laws of the state. We hear the argument, again, put thus: although church and state are independent, yet the American is a Christian people. The country was settled by Christians. The great majority are Christians now. Hence it is right that the dissentient or the immigrant should submit to the Christian features of the society whose hospitality he receives. If he does not like them, let him go away. But unfortunately for this argument, it is the state which enforces these Sunday laws; and the state declares itself non-Christian, and it invites these dissentients to become citizens, covenanting with them solemnly that as citizens they shall incur no inequality or loss of civil right by reason of their religious views. Now, if a man has a natural and secular right to live without a Sabbath, this objection is formidable. Once more: it is argued, Christians have a civic right to observe the Lord's day, if they believe it their duty; and hence it is a merely secular duty of the state to stop all such employments and amusements of the unbelievers as would disturb the Christian observances. The infidel answers, that it is at least as much the business of the worshipper to take his pious assembly out of the way of the worldly one, the military band, or the clanging factory, as it is the business of the worldling to take his band or factory out of the way of the pious assembly. And this the more, because the infidel believes that the Sunday work and amusement are reasonable and useful, and the worship foolish and vain.

A more tenable plea is found in the laws of nature, as exem-

plified from social experience. It can be experimentally proved that the bodies of men and domestic animals, and the social affections, habits, mental health, virtue and domestic welfare of human beings, call for a hebdomadal rest. Hence, even if we take the restricted view of the commonwealth which makes it the institute for realizing only secular order and justice, this truth authorizes the state to enforce a Sabbath rest and secure its blessings for the dependent classes of human beings and the helpless beasts. It is a prerogative as proper and righteous as when a state abates a nuisance hostile to hygiene, or forbids the working of minor children and servants beyond a humane number of hours per day. But this step brings us, in fact, to the threshold of what is the true argument for Sunday laws by the state.

While the American state is not positively Christian, no state can rightfully be atheistic. The doctrines of redemption are not the necessary basis of the validity of a state: witness the fact that the Bible recognized the validity of the authority of Rome, a pagan empire; and that every sound jurist in Christendom recognizes the validity of Mohammedan states. But theism is essential as the basis of civil government. Atheism, if prevalent, would leave civic authority logically baseless. The legitimate state exists only by virtue of the will of God as Maker and providential Ruler; and therefore can ground its authority only in its recognition of him. But the Sabbath, while in its special aspect a commemorative institution of redemption to the believer, *is also, in its prior and general aspect, an ordinance for man, as a moral creature, instituted for the race in all times by God, as Maker and Ruler.* The truth which is overlooked by both parties, and which is vital to our argument, is this: that the Sabbath now serves two purposes; with the believing part of the race included in Christ's spiritual kingdom, it is a gospel means of grace; but none the less is it to mankind at large what it was first given for, *an essential institute of that natural theism and that personal, social, and domestic righteousness*, on which civil society rests as its foundations. How fair and consistent this view is will appear when we show that the Sabbath was ordained for man before he needed any redemption. This purpose of its original institution remains immutable, through all ages and dispensations. After man fell, and God in his mercy

set up the spiritual kingdom of redemption, the other use of the Sabbath, as a redemptive ordinance, was superadded. Hence it will follow, that no human being has a natural or civic right either to atheism or to live without a Sabbath. These are simply natural iniquities, subversive of social morals as really as incest or murder, though not so greatly. Here, then, is the cardinal sophism of the infidel plea against Sabbath laws, that he has assumed the privilege of neglecting the Sabbath to be, so long as he professes no Christian conscience, *his natural right*, unjustly restricted by another's erroneous conscience, like the natural right to labor and to recreation; whereas it will be shown that Sabbath observance is, for every human being, a moral obligation of natural theism and social order.

First, then, it is to be shown that theism is essential to the grounding of the state as a valid authority over men. Here we come directly into collision with the *πρωτον σεῖδος* of the infidel party: that natural morality and intelligence are the "basis of secular government, and the adequate guarantee of public order, prosperity and righteousness." This is expressly denied. It is asserted, on the contrary, that the fear of God and the sanction of his law are the only adequate basis and guarantee.

The first proof advanced is one which carries little weight with men who glory in despising the lights of history and experience, but which all sensible men appraise at a prime value. There never has been a permanent civilized order in the world founded on atheism. The only notable experiment was that made during the French Revolution, when for a short time, at the darkest period of the "Reign of Terror," atheism was in the ascendant. The result is too well known for comment. It was too bad even for Robespierre, who found it necessary to cut off his atheistic comrades' heads. All the thinking men of all ages and schools, pagan and Christian, have usually judged atheistic principles inconsistent with any moral order. All the best ethical writers, of all ages and schools, have grounded their moral systems in man's responsibility to God. So essential is religious belief to any moral order, that erroneous belief has always been better than none; theism, under the form of polytheism, was always a cornerstone of such heathen commonwealths as ever became civilized or great, like Egypt, Tyre, Rome, Athens; and in these, when belief declined, the national virtue and greatness went down with

it. If our modern destructives would find actual instances of societies founded according to their ideal, they must look among the miserable human herds of the Hottentots or Australians. Experience offers no other verification of their theory.

Secondly. Civil government cannot be safely based without theism, because there is no explanation of the origin of the civil ruler's moral right, or of the moral obligation of allegiance, or of the right of property, without a God and his ordinance. Let the jurist begin without a God, with any theory of "a social contract," or any such invention as prevailed from Hobbes to Rousseau, his logical structure proves an absurd card castle, demolished by the first touch of reason. There is no way in which the duty of allegiance and obedience to the civil magistrate can receive a moral foundation, save from the ordinance of God, the Maker and Sovereign Proprietor, instituting it. There is no tenable account of the right of property, except in God's gift of the earth and its goods to man as his rational tenant. For the well-informed reader there is no need of repeating the proof. He will recall, for instance, Paley's demolition of the theory of social contract.

Thirdly. A practical argument is found in our experience of human nature. It is corrupted from its origin. Man is naturally a sinner, selfish, unjust, heedless and passionate. It requires all possible restraints to prevent his breaking out into such disorders as are destructive of social well-being. Take away the restraints of the divine authority, the fear of future penalty, the hope of reward, and the average man becomes an uncontrollable rebel against duty. There have been self-controlled virtuous atheists? Perhaps. Still the principle holds that "one swallow does not make a summer." The exception does not destroy the rule. Your average atheist, from the Hottentot up to Tom Paine, is not noted for morals. The decent atheists are usually men who are shielded from temptation by a careful rearing, comfortable wealth, and wholesome surroundings. But the majority of human beings for whom governments legislate, are exposed to poverty and strong temptations; and the general result is, that then moral principles, unsustained by religious convictions, give way.

Fourthly, and chiefly. The species of atheism which prevails in our day involves also materialism. In this it is consistent.

The argument which banishes spirit from the human person must also, if carried out, banish the infinite Spirit from the universe. The history of human opinion shows that this is a true maxim: *Nullus spiritus in microcosmo, nullus Deus in macrocosmo*. But it is simply impossible that materialism can sustain any theory of real moral obligation, virtue, or merit. The popular and practical argument for this assertion—than which there is none more conclusive—is, that beasts have no ethics, and can have none; and materialism makes man an improved beast. The sound philosopher reaches the same conclusion in a more analytic way, by observing that if all of man is material, then no motives in man can be generically different from animal instinct. Rational free agency is impossible, because man acts only from animal impulse; and there is consequently no room for a true moral responsibility. The history of opinion proves the same fact; for materialists, when they attempt to write ethics, always resolve the moral motive into selfishness, desire of applause, or some lower appetency. If there is no God, then of course there can be no responsibility higher than the social; for there is no one to whom responsibility can bind. There can be no imperative standard of duty or obligation asserting any moral supremacy over the individual will, because the only other intelligent will is that of the fellow-creature, which is no higher than, and just as fallible as, the will to be regulated by it. Of course there can be no future responsibility, and every moral restraint arising from it is broken. There can be no sacredness about the human person or life; but the murder of a man would be as the killing of a beast. It is indisputable that the apostle expresses the legitimate ethics of atheism: "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Is not this precisely the philosophy of Elizur Wright, the president of the League? P. 83:

"The perfection of human nature is when the spiritual in man has the profoundest reverence for the physical; worships it in fact with every offering that can contribute to its highest health and the perfect development, in their due time and order, of all its marvellous faculties and functions. Every such act of worship reacts on the conscious mind itself, and fills it to overflowing with good will. This is virtue; this is the highest happiness. There is no charity which does not begin at home. Charity is like gravity, which acts inversely as the square of the distance. Who wrongs his own body will wrong everything and everybody else."

It has been said by Christian moralists that even the atheist, if he would make a correct analysis of the facts of consciousness,

would be led to recognize the moral distinctions and obligation. This may be admitted conditionally. If it could be that the atheist should so analyze the functions of conscience as to recognize these truths: that the simple judgments of right and wrong are primary and necessary intuitions; that they are rational; that they are immutable; that the judgment of obligation attending this intuition is no mere modification of association, or of self-love, or of the love of applause, or of sympathetic harmony, but is itself an integral part of the necessary truth, then indeed he might be both atheist and recognizer of morality. But it is certain that no consistent atheist will ever make this correct analysis of the moral consciousness; there is an inevitable reason in his theory why he will not. *Obligation implies an obligator.* Who; where is he? The shortest and simplest examination shows that it cannot be merely the fellow-creature, nor civil government. Let a man deny that there is a God, and he finds no obligator. Then, it is logically impossible he should construe obligation aright. It is unavoidable that in his blind analysis he shall pervert this intuition of obligation, which points essentially to a God, into some imagined modification of some lower feeling. And let it be repeated, the consistent atheist is always a materialist. If man is only material, then this other feeling which is transmuted to simulate what the atheist calls judgment of obligation, be it what it may, cannot be anything higher than an animal sensibility. Thus the very possibility of moral, rational obligation is gone. *Atheism cannot be moral*, save by an utter inconsistency. Our writers, when asserting that even the atheist would find a basis for morals if he would analyze consciousness correctly, supposed that they were thereby paying an honorable tribute to the value of these moral intuitions. Their motive was good, but their words were none the less misleading; they gave us but an imaginary, hypothetical *dictum*, whose condition is impossible to be realized.

Much of the unbelief of our age is pantheistic. The same charge must be made against the pantheism which now prevails: that it is virtual atheism, and cannot have a consistent morality. One reason is, that it denies a personal God. But man's common sense always views obligation as binding to a personal will. To say that there is no personal God is practically to say that there is no obligator. And secondly, if pantheism is true, then

it is idle to talk of any standard of right and wrong controlling any human will from evil, for that evil will is God's will. The divine will, being identified with all other wills, embraces and sanctions all the evil, as truly as the good. In this form also, atheism cannot be moral.

Thus the prime error of these infidels is refuted which asserts that "natural morality," unsustained by either natural or revealed religion, is adequate for the purposes of society. This is positively false, as is proved by experience and reason. But the state is a moral institute. Its law professes to be a rule of moral right. Its legitimate ends are to protect the well-being of society, by upholding moral right between men. Hence the state cannot be atheistic and exist safely. It must seek its foundation in theism, with its doctrines of responsibility to God and divine rewards and punishments. It must derive its warrants from God, or else it retains no valid power over the conscience.

It follows from this truth, that he who assails the being and moral government of God thereby attacks the very existence of the state. He should no more have the privilege of doing his atheistic work than of attacking the family, which is the secular or earthly foundation of civil society. Both state and federal governments claim the right to ordain monogamy as the only wholesome condition of the family institute, and to uphold it by punishing bigamy with pains and penalties. In doing this, the government rightly scorns the pretext of the Mormon, that polygamy is one of his religious tenets, and that, therefore, his religious liberty is infringed if he is restrained by corporeal penalties from practicing it. The state has an equal right to restrain the public propagation of atheism and the blasphemy of Almighty God. Of course, we all recognize the inviolability of the rights of conscience, and the irrelevancy of corporeal pains as an agency to propagate truth in the love of it. But while assigning the widest possible scope to liberty of thought, and removing the limit of it to the outermost place consistent with beneficial existence of society, we can say no less than this: that the right of the state to exist must imply its right to preserve the essential conditions of its own existence; and that to this the narrower claims of individuals must, so far, give place. For instance: private creditors of a commonwealth have a right to be

paid the just amounts of the debts due them. Few personal rights can be plainer. But if circumstances arise, as foreign invasion or domestic insurrection, in which the whole possible revenues of the state are necessary to maintain its own organic existence, then the jurist says that the right of the private creditor to payment must lie in abeyance. Because, if the state betrays its own existence, for want of those revenues, the creditor loses his right forever by the annihilation of the very personality of his debtor. In like manner, if the propagation of atheism destroys the foundation of the state's existence, this pretended right to freedom of thought in teaching atheism is superseded by the state's right to exist. She has the civil right, as a secular institute, to suppress this personal license. Hence it appears: so far from the Federal government's being guilty of any oppression, in refusing to permit her mails to be used to carry blasphemous or atheistic documents, or attacks upon the purity of domestic life, this is the *minimum* of duty she owes to herself and her constituents. The only debatable question is, whether she ought not to do more. But, they cry, the government may, under pretext of this duty, carry her intrusions farther, and invade the proper liberty of thought of the citizens. If she does so, she will go wrong; and that will be the proper time to protest. If just and necessary powers are to be withheld because they may be abused, then no power whatever could be conferred on the state.

It has thus been shown that the maintenance of theism is the essential foundation of civil government. The constitution of the United States was, therefore, wrong, in that it omitted all reference to Almighty God as the source of its powers; and that of the late Confederate States was right in doing so. The reader is now at a point of view whence he can understand the concern of the commonwealth with Sunday laws. The observation deserves to be repeated: that the Sabbath was first given to man before he needed any redemption, by God as his natural Creator and Ruler. As such, it is an institution of God's natural dominion over mankind, an institution of natural theism and social morals. In this aspect the Sabbath belongs to the race, under all ages and dispensations, and is as obligatory on Pagan and Moslem as on Jews and Christians. Man fell: and God was pleased to institute, in the hand of his Son our Messiah, a spirit-

nal kingdom of redemption, for the justification and sanctification of believers: a kingdom independent, under the new dispensation, of civil governments; and he was pleased also to employ the Lord's day, in this spiritual kingdom, as an ordinance of grace and redemption to saints. *This latter application has in no sense superseded the primeval one.* This is the truth which the assailants of Sunday laws, and even the Lutheran theology, overlook. The whole plausibility of their argument comes from this omission. If, then, it can be repaired by the establishment of our thesis, their sophism is exploded.

This error has, unfortunately, borrowed no little strength from the mistake made by the early Reformers, and especially the Lutheran, concerning the Lord's day. They taught (see Augsburg Confession) that the Sabbath had never been anything more than a Jewish, positive, and typical command; whence it passed away, of course, at the vanishing of the old dispensation, like all other Jewish shadows. The Lord's day therefore, if observed under the new dispensation, can have no other basis of authority than the ecclesiastical recommending a seemingly holy day, and the secular law ordering a wholesome police regulation. It is easy to foresee how infidels, attacking the divine authority of the day, would avail themselves of this theological error. In fact, a mass meeting of infidel anti-Sabbatarians in one of the great American cities, exhibited the monstrous alliance of a Lutheran minister of the gospel joining his false exegesis with their license to overthrow God's day. Now the proof of our thesis corrects this theological error as well as the infidel argument. By proving that the Sabbath command was anti-Levitical, was moral, was universal, and was perpetual, we effectually dispose of the false position, that it was abrogated with the shadows of the old dispensation. This *Review* (Oct. 1857) contained an exhaustive discussion of this phase of the question. Referring our readers to that number, we shall now touch the heads of the argument as briefly as our object permits. And our thesis as to the original institution of the Sabbath will be established by three proofs: ancient tradition, sacred history, and the physiologic and psychologic testimony of man's nature itself.

The oldest of the traditionary testimonies is that latest discovered by Assyrian research. The cuneiform writings, along

with their history of the flood, distinctly testify that primeval men observed the seventh day as sacred time and by divine appointment. The oldest of the Greek poetic theologians is Hesiod. He is quoted as saying (*Dierum*, line 6th): "The first, the fourth also, and the seventh is a sacred day." And again: "The seventh day once more, the splendid dawn of the sun." And Homer: "The seventh day then arrived, the sacred day." Again: "The seventh was sacred." "The seventh dawn was at hand, and with this all the series is completed." Thus also writes Callimachus the poet: "It was now the Sabbath day, and with this all was accomplished." Again: "Yea, the seventh is the parent-day." Again: "The seventh day is first, and the seventh day is the complement." The elegies of Solon, the Athenian legislator, also proclaimed the seventh day as more sacred than the rest. Josephus against Apion (II. 40), says: "There is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the Barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come." Allowing for the exaggeration of the controversialist, we still find evidence here of a widely spread usage. It must have been rather the remaining effect of primeval custom and law than recent imitation of the despised Jews. Philo, the learned Jew, nearly contemporary with the Christian era, calls the Sabbath *ἐορτὴ πᾶν ὄλημος*. To such testimonies as these should, in justice, be added the numerous proofs of the observance of stated holy days, such as the new moons, among the most ancient pagans. These, though not in all cases coincident with the Old Testament Sabbath, still confirm its original authority in two ways: they are evidently inaccurate imitations of it lingering among the growing twilight of polytheism; they are practical admissions of the truth that, in order to continue such a creature as man religious, he must have a stated religious day.

Let it be understood that we, of course, do not advance this traditionary proof as sufficient, by itself, to establish the divine authority of the Sabbath. But it raises a strong probability. Taken with the proof that follows, it shows that God, in creating man, appointed him a sacred day. The appointment was for a long time observed as a world-wide institution. The separation of apostate parts of the race from the church in the lineage of the "sons of God" did not by any means terminate their ob-

servance of the day. But the decline in the proper observance of the day evidently hastened the spread of idolatry. And when the observance of the sacred day was totally lost in any tribe, then monotheism and the knowledge of the true God were also lost. The necessity of Sabbath observance, as the great school of natural theism, is thus illustrated by the state of the whole pagan world in this historical fact. Wherever there has been no weekly sacred day, there has been *neither pure monotheism, nor a single instance of a civic order combining civilization and constitutional liberty*. Let the instance be produced. Paganism has presented us a certain degree of civilization, with despotism; or a certain rude freedom, with savagery, as among our Teuton ancestors described in Tacitus' *Germania*: that is all. Our modern infidels vainly flatter themselves, that if they can banish the Sabbath, they will have a reign of rational atheism. They know very well, that by banishing the Sabbath they will destroy Christianity. But they are utterly mistaken. "That which hath been is that which shall be." Human nature is still human nature. The condition they will inevitably have, will be, not rational infidelity enthroned, but rank superstition, fetichism, polytheism, pagan hierarchy; and their Sabbathless society will prove itself capable, not of republican freedom, but only of the species of gigantic despotism which ruled in Egypt and Chaldea, and which cemented the stones of the pyramids and the hanging gardens of Nebuchadnezzar with the blood of the "proletariat." The commonwealth taught by history claims that she has a right to maintain the Sabbath, because she has the primary right of self-preservation, and God and his Sabbath are the corner-stones of her being. She sees that constitutional liberty has only been made possible for modern ages, as reformed Christianity has given back to the European races the theism and the holy day which God gave the race at its beginning.

The civil legislator, in appealing to the Bible as his second witness to this fact, uses the book, not as the gospel of redemption, but as the authentic and inspired history of God's original constitution of human society. It is not forgotten that it is the trick of our opponents to set this witness aside with the easy assertion that the Bible, and especially the Old Testament, is mythical. This is no place to go into the full argument for its authenticity, nor is it necessary. The assaults upon its historical

credit we simply denounce as impertinences. That battle has been long ago fought and decided. The true history of the race, the real scholarship, the intelligent virtue, are with the Bible. These renewed pretences, that it is discredited by any later researches, are shallow and unwarrantable. They are especially unworthy of respectful treatment at this day, when the marvellous results of Egyptology and the Assyrian explorations have shed a flood of confirmatory light on the sacred history, and when the proud waves of skeptical physical science are retreating from its bulwarks of truth in confessed defeat.

Authentic history is the chief guide of legislation, next to the eternal principles of right and wrong. The Old Testament is the most authentic of ancient histories, and it is, for the legislator, of most fundamental importance; because it is the only history in the world that gives the foundation facts of God's organization of human society. No commonwealth can be safely reared, save on these foundations. If it be built on others, it must fall, because the very laws of nature and Providence are against it. Now, the sacred history tells us that the Maker founded human society on *obedience to himself*; and he being essential righteousness, this was to found it on righteousness. He raised two buttresses for it in Paradise, the family and the Sabbath; and man's lapse from that first state did not supersede, but only enhance, the necessity of these two supports. The family was to provide moral nurture for the members of society; the Sabbath was to perpetuate that theism and knowledge and fear of God which are the essential condition of all social welfare, as well as future salvation for sinners. Thus, the Sabbath was originally no Jewish or Levitical ceremony; but the institution of the race, given to them in their first parents, even before their need of redemption had emerged. "The Sabbath was made for man." (Gen. ii. 2, 3.) God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, at the end of the very first week. For whom did he sanctify it? Evidently, for Adam and Eve. (Gen. iv. 3, margin.) The seventh day was evidently observed for religious worship and oblation by the human family, when we next hear of them as sinners. (Gen. vii. 2, 10, margin.) God enabled Noah, even in the awful crisis of the approaching deluge, to complete his entrance into the ark against the sacred day. (Gen. viii. 10, 12.) Noah observes the seventh day's division of time, while

still shut up in the ark. (Gen. xvii. 12.) The male child must be circumcised one week after its birth; showing that this division of time by the sacred day still prevailed in Abraham's time. (Gen. xxix. 27.) The usual length of a wedding-feast in the days of Jacob was a week, which shows that the Sabbath was still in use, at least as a division of time, in Mesopotamia, after it was becoming idolatrous. In Gen. l. 10, we find that a week was the duration of a funeral mourning in the days of Joseph; and that for the Egyptians, as well as the Hebrews, Exod. xii. 15 teaches us that before the Sabbath commandment had been given on Sinai, a week was the length proper for a solemn religious festival. In Exod. xvi. 25, still before the giving of the Decalogue, two supernatural exceptions weekly were made to the regular ordering of the *manna*, to insure Israel's keeping the Sabbath. It fell on six days regularly; but none fell on the seventh. That which was kept over for a day, uniformly putrefied; but that which was kept over from the sixth for the food of the seventh, did not putrefy.

So, when we come to the Mosaic legislation proper—Exod. xx. 8-11—the command to sanctify the Sabbath begins: "Remember the Sabbath day," showing that it was no new institute, but an old one, only requiring more faithful observance. So, while the ritual commands have often a reason assigned for them from some particular event in the Hebrews' own history, as the Pass-over, from the sparing of their first-born in Egypt, the reason assigned for the Sabbath is as universal as the race of man. But the conclusive evidence is, that foreigners and pagans being among the Hebrews were required also to observe the day. Indeed, it was made the Hebrew magistrate's duty to enforce the observance of it on the "strangers that were within his gates." See also Neh. xiii. 16 and 21. This is most significant, because foreigners were not only not required to observe the ritual ceremonies peculiar to the Hebrew religion, but were forbidden. No pagan could participate in the paschal feast until he had become a Jew. Thus God teaches his church to teach the world that the Sabbath is not only obligatory on believers, as members of the kingdom of redemption, but also on men simply as subjects of the kingdom of nature. This evidence of sacred history is crowned by the fact that when the coming and sacrifice of Christ has superseded all the merely ceremonial reasons for the

observance of the Sabbath as a type, still the apostolic Christians did not cease to sanctify the holy day. It was, indeed, moved forward to the first day, the commemoration of the resurrection and Pentecost; but the whole moral obligation of the Sabbath was, by inspired precedent, transferred to the "Lord's day." And the authority of the last of the apostles, John (Rev. i. 10), consecrated this as the sacred day of the Redeemer of the world.

Now, a cavil may be attempted from this change, thus: the Sabbatarians have conceded that the spiritual kingdom of redemption and the secular commonwealth are independent. Then this cardinal event in redemption should have no effect in changing the usage of the state. The latter, if it retains any Sabbath, ought to cleave to the seventh day. Indeed, since the Christian church believes that the completion of Christ's sacrifice has superseded the typical reasons for the seventh day, the correct conclusion would be that the state also should cease to regard the seventh without taking up the first. This is the answer: that typical reasons for sanctifying the seventh, even during the typical period of the church's history, were only a part of the reasons. Hence, though these were satisfied, the others remained, and men in all ages still have the same reasons to keep God's original Sabbath which the man in paradise had, and which the men before Abraham and Moses had. Hence, all that could be fairly inferred would be this: that while the church moved over its observance to the first day, the state should retain its original day. But why should this discrepancy be kept up? Why embarrass the obligatory observance of all Christian citizens, by making that first day secular which their Redeemer compels them to make sacred? Church and state are independent, but they are not hostile. The state, the organ of earthly righteousness, need not be so jealous of the church, the organ of spiritual salvation, as to refuse to act with her in this one non-essential point, when that God, who is both Creator and Ruler, and also "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," honored his risen Son by transferring the original Sabbath to his resurrection-day.

The third proof of our proposition is that presented by man's body and spirit themselves. The experimental science of physiology has evinced that man's body and nerves were created by

their Maker a seven-day clock. To secure their best endurance and working, they must be "wound up" weekly by the Sabbath rest. Yea, God has written the same law on the constitution of the very brutes which he has given to man for servants. The wayfarer who rests one day in seven progresses farther than he who presses on seven days. The army which rests on the Lord's day marches farther, in the long run, than the one which moves seven days in the week. The team which does its task on the Sunday is worn and broken down, while that which is permitted to keep the Sabbath rest continues fresh and healthy. The body of the human being who observes the rest is, other things being equal, more healthy, efficient, and long-lived than that of the Sabbath-breaker. The same rules hold of the health of the spirit. Let the tension of worldly care and business, of study, or of executive tasks, be continued through the seventh day as well as all the six, and the poise of the faculties is lost, the spirit becomes feverish, the emotions are exasperated, the soul wears itself out by its own friction. For the intelligent and candid reader these facts need only be intimated. He knows that they are too numerous and authentic to be disputed. It is thus seen that he who "made the Sabbath for man," made man for the Sabbath. The creature and the institution are fitted to each other. This is a perfect proof that our thesis is correct in asserting the Sabbath rest to be an institution coeval with the race, and designed for a whole race, under all dispensations.

But when we come to the moral argument, we find it yet more conclusive. Let the reader again be reminded that we claim it, not as it might be constructed on the higher ground of man's redemption and sanctification, but only from the position of man the rational, moral member of the secular but moral institute, the commonwealth. Let us resume the points established, that civil government is moral, and founded in moral obligation; that the only basis of morals and obligation is theism, the knowledge and fear of the true God of creation and providence, of his will as the prime rule of right, and of his righteous rewards and punishments; that a holy day reserved to him is the only sufficient means to preserve among men, especially as fallen, that knowledge and fear. The last point might be powerfully argued from experience alone. Where has there ever been a people who, after wholly deserting the Sabbath, have retained (not to

say Christianity, but even) a healthy monotheism? History tells of none. Islam is monotheistic, and hence the Moslems have ever been more effective, civilized, and triumphant than the polytheists near them; but this is because Islam has a *quasi* Sabbath, its Holy Friday recurring weekly, and devoted to the worship of God and the study of the Koran. Again do we remind our destructive "progressives" that there is no safe guide for legislation outside the law of righteousness, save experience. The experience of all ages is against them. Man's nature remains the same. "Like causes produce like effects." Hence, when they demand that we shall discard the sure light of experience, and plunge into their perilous novelties, they are guilty of an impertinence whose arrogance can only be equalled by its injustice.

But the least *modicum* of practical wisdom shows us that our proposition cannot but be true. Man is a finite creature and a creature of habits. Hence *he never does anything effectually, save as he has stated times for doing it.* Life is full of homely instances of this rule. Savages eat such food as chance brings them at irregular times. But it is presumed that no people ever dined well who did not have a regular dinner hour. Courts of justice must have their court days. Merchants must have their hours of exchange. Banks must have their "discount days." So, if there is to be any instrumentality to keep alive the knowledge of God, it must have its stated season allotted to it, or it will be forgotten. Thus it comes about that, when the Sabbath is lost, true religion is lost. There is also a vital connection between the family, that other bulwark of society, and the Sabbath. A day of rest from secular pursuits is necessary to enable the parental and domestic influences to come into effectual play. While the working-day world flows on, it absorbs parents and children in its stream, and, indeed, usually separates them by their avocations, so that they are almost strangers to each other. In every civilized community the majority of the people must be toilers. But the wealthy and self-indulgent are in most cases equally absorbed by the equally exacting demands of pleasure. To bring parents and children together, this turmoil of work and amusement must be bidden to cease. A sacred leisure must be provided and protected from the temptations of gain and pleasure, in order that parents and children may be truly reunited

around the hearth, the true altar of well-ordered society. There the sacred influences of parental love may play effectually, and the virtues of a moral and pious home be diffused. Nowhere is there a better and more truthful statement of this connection than in the "Cotter's Saturday Night" of Burns. Without a Sunday there would have been no such Saturday night, with its blessed humanizing and restraining influences.

To sum up, then : it is admitted that every man ought to enjoy the fullest liberty of thought compatible with the ends of government, and that the secular state ought to be separate from, and independent of, the church, pursuing as its proper object the protection of the earthly rights of the people. If the Christian Sabbath were nothing but an ordinance of the spiritual kingdom and means of redemption, then the state should leave its enforcement, as it properly does that of the Christian worship and sacraments, to the persuasions of the church. But while the day is this, it is also another thing : the necessary support of that natural theism, domestic virtue, and popular morality, which are the foundations of the state. The state is from God, exists by his ordinance, holds its powers by delegation from him, and has no other basis for the righteousness it seeks to enforce between man and man than his will. On the basis of atheism there can be no stable structure, either of ethics or government. Hence the state's right to exist includes her right to protect these essential conditions of her existence, and to enforce that outward observance of the Sabbath rest which alone makes the inculcation of God's fear and of public and private virtue practicable, through those distinct, but friendly, coöperative agencies which God has ordained to keep men in his fear, the family and the church. Every true statesman knows that, unless the suitable conditions of public and private morality exist in the people, no statecraft, no constitution-making, can create or preserve a prosperous free commonwealth. In this sense, the statesman alone cannot make a state. Divine providence must contribute its essential coöperation, through those other institutes which are as truly ordained of God, as original and as independent as the state itself, the family and the church. Wise statesmen have learned from experience that the state's tinkering with these, in the way of persecutions of heresies, state endowments, and such like expedients, only cripp-

ples their ability for good. But this is no reason why the state should rashly overlook or deny the vital value of their training work to its ends, or should so wield its secular power as to deprive them of the suitable means and opportunities for doing their all-important functions. On the contrary, the state is bound so to enforce outward rest and quiet, and the cessation of secular labors and public amusements, as to honor God's natural ordinance, and to give the allied institutes, the family and the church, their proper opportunity for doing their work on the people.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1881.¹

THIS Assembly, it is surmised, has left an extremely pleasant impression upon the minds of its members. The little "Mountain City" of Staunton, Va., as its inhabitants love to call it, is at all times a pleasant place to visit. Situated in the middle of the "Great Valley," midway between the Blue Ridge and North Mountain, it presents the tourist, in its bold and rounded hills, endless undulating surface and distant but majestic mountain-ramparts, a landscape to whose perfect beauty nothing is lacking, except the contrast of the level azure of a Swiss lake. As though to greet the great convocation with a cheerful welcome, the country clothed itself in all the glory of summer verdure, combining the greenness of the North of England with the brilliancy of an Italian sky. Nor were the good people behind their country, in the hospitable reception extended to the visitors. The doors of the beautiful homes of all denominations were thrown open without distinction. All that a cordial, but unpretending, hospitality could do, was combined with mountain air and propitious weather to make the season of the Assembly's sittings enjoyable.

A representation absolutely full would have given one hundred and forty-eight commissioners. Of these there were present on the first day one hundred and sixteen; and during the whole sessions, one hundred and thirty. Precisely at 11 A. M. of May 19th, the Moderator, Dr. Thomas A. Hoyt, of Nashville, ascended the pulpit. A great audience filled the spacious and commanding church. The text of the opening sermon was Galatians, i. 6, 7, and its subject was the duty of preaching only that system of truth known as the "doctrines of grace," as the only one revealed in the gospel. This glorious system was unfolded, in constant contrast, as the text suggested, with the other schemes of religion erroneously deduced from the gospel. The

¹ This article appeared in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, July, 1881

“doctrines of grace” exhibit their supreme excellence in these four respects :

I. In that they alone do full honor to the Holy Scriptures, asserting their full inspiration in consistency with the personality of their writers ; and thus claiming for them supreme and absolute authority ; while admitting the beautiful adaptation of their humanity to the human soul. The “doctrines of grace” also recognize the distinction between natural and revealed religion, and between the general contents of Scripture, all of which are authoritative, and the special truths of redemption ; while they alone recognize all the declarations of the word, and successfully combine them into a compact and logical system.

II. The “doctrines of grace” cohere fully with the revelation God has made of his own essence and personality. They convert the mystery of his Trinity in Unity from an abstraction into a glorious practical truth, by connecting man’s redemption essentially with the several persons and their relations and functions. And while all lower theories of redemption must needs mutilate God in some of his perfections in order to permit man’s escape from his doom, the gospel plan not only permits, but requires, the highest exercise of all the attributes which make up God’s infinite essence.

III. The “doctrines of grace” portray our fallen nature in colors exactly conformable to human history, and the convictions of man’s guilty conscience. And they propose to deal with the fallen soul in the way most conducive to its true sanctification and salvation, by enforcing the holy law, in all its extent, as the rule of the Christian’s living ; while they quicken into action the noblest motives of love and gratitude, by bestowing an unbought justification.

Thus, IV. These doctrines embody the only salvation suited to man’s wants and worthy of God’s perfections. It is a salvation righteous, holy, honorable to God, which yet bestows on sinners an assured, ineffable, rational, and everlasting blessedness. Hence the high and holy duty, enforced as much from the tremendous necessities of lost souls as from the rights of Jehovah, to know no other gospel than this, and to preach it always and everywhere.

The preacher, evidently furnished with the advantages of a thorough preparation and untrammelled by notes, delivered this

great body of vital truth in language elevated, classic, and perspicuous, supporting his words by an utterance and action of graceful dignity. As he expanded side after side of the glories of the true gospel, the hearer's soul was raised higher and higher towards the level of the angelic anthem, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will to men!" Our Redeemer-God was brought near in his full-orbed glory; his severer attributes harmonized, but undimmed, by his benevolence and mercy. Man fallen was placed in the dust and ashes of humility. Man redeemed was lifted to a hope and bliss as honorable to God, the giver, as precious to the receiver. "Mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other."

The new Assembly then proceeded to organize itself, by the unanimous election of Dr. Robt. P. Farris, of St. Louis, Mo., as Moderator, an honor well earned and skilfully and worthily borne, and of the Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm, of South Carolina, as Temporary Clerk.

The body quickly gave an earnest of its purpose of work, by resolving to proceed at once, in the afternoon, to hear the reports of the Executive Committees. These exhibited advancement, except in that work of fundamental importance, Home Missions. It is safe to take the money given by the churches to these evangelical agencies as an index of the interest and prayer expended on them. Instead of the \$40,000 which the previous Assembly found to be the least measure of the urgent wants of the Home Missions' work, and which it asked the churches to bestow, the committee receive for this cause \$18,526. If the contribution to the kindred work of the Evangelist's Fund, \$10,958, to the Invalid Fund, \$10,248, and the sum of about \$4,000 supposed to be spent in Home Mission work by Presbyteries not in connection, be added, we get, as the aggregate devoted in our church to home work and charities, . . . \$43,732
The gifts to Foreign Missions were 59,215

An encouraging increase of \$11,000.

The gifts to the Publication Committee, ...	8,009
The gifts to candidates for the ministry, ...	10,335
The gifts to the Colored Institute, ...	2,000
And those to colored evangelists, ...	597

Thus the total of these contributions was \$123,888

This is less than an average of one dollar from each of our reported communicants.

For some years past, the General Assembly of the Northern Presbyterian Church, which also meets by precedent on the third Thursday of May, has sent to ours a simple greeting in the form of a telegram. To this our Assembly has usually responded in the same terms. On the second day of the recent sessions, Dr. Adger, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, proposed that our Assembly should take the initiative, by sending, without delay, the usual message. This, to his surprise, evoked one of the most animated debates of the session. No opposition seemed to be made to the intercourse itself, while kept within the bounds of a simple recognition and expression of good wishes. But it was argued that the injuries and detractions put upon Southern Presbyterians by that Assembly, and never yet withdrawn or repaired, made it improper for us to take the initiative in such messages. Our commissioners to the Baltimore Conference in 1874, sustained by our Assemblies, had declared that the withdrawal of false accusations was an absolute prerequisite to the resumption of any fraternal relations. But the action proposed to-day was a departure from that righteous and self-respecting resolution. Moreover, it would be misunderstood as indicating a purpose in us, of which it is presumed no Southern Presbyterian could for a moment dream, to retreat from that position, and to approach a dishonorable and deceitful reunion made at the expense of truth and our own good name. It was urged that the separate independence of the Southern church was a great boon, mercifully bestowed on her by God at an opportune time, when that laxity of discipline and doctrine now so prevalent began to invade the Presbyterian Church of the North and of Scotland. This independence, then, is not to be regarded as an expression of our pique or revenge; but as a holy trust, in a solemn and unexpected way bestowed on us by the divine Head of the church, as a necessary bulwark for his vital truth among us. Its jealous maintenance by us, therefore, is not to be treated as a prompting of ill-temper; for this is an odious and slanderous travesty of the facts. The line of action hitherto pursued by our church is, rather, the simple performance of a solemn duty to God and his church and truth. And the slightest ten-

dency towards the betrayal of this independence is to be deprecated.

It was replied by the other side: that our Assemblies had never, on account of the unatoned injuries of the other church, refused all official intercourse with it; but from the first had responded to such civilities as might pass between us and any other denomination; that the ground taken in 1870, when an exchange of delegates was asked, was, that this especial mark of community of church-order and affection could never be extended, until false accusations against us were withdrawn; that the only question here raised, whether our Assembly shall send the first telegram, instead of answering theirs, is really a very trivial one, having no significance except that which would be given it by a refusal under existing circumstances; that our church's separate independence was indeed a priceless trust bestowed on her at an opportune time, as the protestants have well said; and that we and they are altogether at one in not tolerating the slightest thought of its surrender. Our church stands now where she has always stood; we take no step forwards, and none backwards.

The latter views prevailed, and the Assembly authorized the Committee on Foreign Correspondence to send the usual formal greeting to the Northern Assembly sitting in Buffalo, N. Y., only thirteen dissenting. In due time, the usual response came from the other body, and so the matter ended. But Dr. Mullaly, of Lexington Presbytery, and a few others, entered their protest, stating in substance the above arguments; to which the Assembly replied with the views advanced by the majority.

The transaction for which this Assembly will probably be most remembered was the final disposition made of the two counter-reports on "Retrenchment and Reform" in the Assembly's committee. On the third day these were taken up, and the Rev. A. C. Hopkins, from Winchester Presbytery, chairman of the committee, was heard on this and a subsequent day, at great length, in defence of the majority report. The Rev. S. T. Martin, the author of the minority report, also spoke in defence of his suggestions, in an excellent spirit and with great ingenuity and force. That he had prejudiced the success of the few practical amendments in our methods, which he really urged, by taking too wide a range of discussion, and by asserting other

doctrines and changes which the great body of the church dread as revolutionary—this had now become obvious to the amiable speaker, as it had all along been obvious to his friends. He now attempted to parry this adverse effect, by pleading that, when called by the Assembly to lay his whole mind before the churches for their discussion, he had but acted conscientiously, in speaking out the whole system of thought on our church-work, which honestly commended itself to his judgment. But now, when he was come to proposing amendments in that work for the church's adoption, he should limit himself to those few changes which were generally obvious and confessedly feasible. And he claimed that members ought now to weigh each of these proposals on its own merits, and unprejudiced by other unpopular speculations—as others might deem them—in which he might be nearly singular. This claim evidently was no more than just. But it was equally evident that members were unable to rise to the dispassionate level of this equity, and that the hearing of Mr. Martin was prejudiced by the previous opposition to his more extreme views, even when he urged his most reasonable proposals.

These he now limited to two: 1, As to aiding education for the ministry, he proposed that an Assembly's Committee of Education should be continued, but that it should perform its brief duties without a paid secretary. These duties should be only to receive remittances from the stronger Presbyteries, and distribute them among the candidates of the poorer and weaker. As for the rest, the selection of candidates suitable to be aided, and the raising of money to aid them, should be left, where the constitution places it, with each Presbytery. But the Assembly should advise Presbyteries which have, for the time, no candidates, and those which have wealth, to contribute to the weak Presbyteries, through the Assembly's committee.

2. As to the work of Evangelism and Home Missions: that there shall be, as now, a committee and secretary of Home Missions. But each Presbytery shall collect its own funds, and manage its own Evangelistic and Home Missions' work. The Assembly, however, shall enjoin all the older and stronger Presbyteries to send to the central committee a given *quota* of all their collections for this work—say one-tenth, or one-fifth—that this agency may have abundant means to aid and push the work

of church-extension and missions in the weaker and the missionary Presbyteries.

The chairman, Mr. Hopkins, on the contrary, moved the Assembly to resolve, that the present system was substantially perfect, and needed no modification, except in slight details of exact responsibility. After long debate, resumed for several days, the Assembly finally voted under the previous question against all amendments by a great majority—only eight adhering to Mr. Martin.

The current discussion on this matter has been made so familiar to Presbyterians through their newspapers that it will not be again detailed here. Another great question was unavoidably mingled in this discussion, by the report of Dr. Girardeau's committee on the Diaconate, also made, by order of a previous Assembly, on the morning of this third day. The whole contents of that thorough report will not be stated here; the readers of the *Review* have already seen the substance of it in the articles of Dr. Girardeau, in our January and April numbers. Of course, all in the Assembly were ready to admit that the deacon is a scriptural officer; that every fully organized congregation should have deacons; that his office is distinguished from the presbyter's by its functions, which are, not spiritual teaching and rule, but collection and distribution of the church's oblations. But the positions of Dr. Girardeau's committee excited the opposition of many on these following points, which are the points especially involved in the discussion on "Retrenchment and Reform": The committee held that, in the fully organized church, the distinct separation between presbyterial and diaconal functions was obligatory and proper, not indeed for the true being, but for the best being, health, and ulterior safety of the church. Many others held, that presbyters are also *ex officio* deacons, and may always assume, in addition to their proper teaching and ruling functions, diaconal functions, if convenience and policy seem to dictate it. But especially, the committee held that diaconal functions extend beyond the concerns of a single congregation, when many congregations are acting concurrently in matters of oblation and distribution; even as the local presbyter assumes rule over the church at large when he sits in a superior court. But the opponents of the committee held that the functions of the diaconate can never extend beyond

the local concerns of a particular congregation. Hence it follows, that when many congregations, or the whole church, engage jointly in oblation and distribution, not a deacon, but a minister, shall perform this general diaconal work. Of course, the doctrine of the committee contains the corollary, that these treasuryships and distributions also should be, like the congregational, in diaconal hands, where the church is fully and correctly organized. Then, qualifications and functions will be properly connected. Presbyters, supposed to be qualified and called of God to spiritual functions, will not be diverted and perverted from their proper duties to financial affairs—for which they are notoriously often disqualified. Financial affairs will be put into the hands of men not called of God to the higher and heterogeneous work of preaching or ruling, but specially selected for their experience in handling money. This is the point of connection between Dr. Girardeau's report and the views of the minority on Reform; for one of the strong points of the latter had been, that the treasuryships of the Assembly's Committees ought to be committed to deacons.

The Assembly, moved by pressure of business and an evident distaste for the discussion, resolved formally to postpone the consideration of the diaconate to next year; but none the less, the argument on these points was unavoidably mingled with that on Mr. Martin's resolutions. Dr. Girardeau, finding his positions assailed by high authority with the most technical weapons of logic, deemed it necessary to defend them technically, as well as popularly and scripturally, in his report. He did both with eminent success. But as his written argument will be given to the church, and as we now only attempt a brief review of the Assembly's own debates, we shall not follow Drs. Lefevre and Girardeau in their formal printed arguments. The opponents of the report placed much stress on the fact that the apostles continued to perform diaconal functions (as Paul, Rom. xv. 25, 26), after the appointment of deacons in Acts vi. A venerable member amused the house by saying that Judas, an apostle, was treasurer of the apostolic family by the Saviour's own appointment, and denominating him "St. Judas," he asked why he was not as well entitled at that time to the prenomens as St. Matthew? If we ascribe to this citation of Judas's treasurer-ship the value to which alone it was entitled, that of a pleasant

jest, then its sufficient repartee would be in saying, that this jumbling of spiritual and diaconal functions turned out wretchedly; as the money was stolen, and the officer disgraced. So that the example weighs on Dr. Girardeau's side. But if the instance be advanced as a serious argument from precedent, then the answer will be, that Judas, when treasurer of the Saviour's family, *was not an apostle*, but only an apostle-elect. He was only in training for that high office.

In arguing from the example of Paul, that the minister's office includes the right to diaconal functions in the settled state of the church, it was strangely forgotten that the apostles were purely extraordinary officers of the church; they could not have any successors. The very reason for the temporary existence of such extraordinary offices was, that the frame of the new dispensation might be by them instituted when as yet it was not. From this simple fact follow two consequences. One is, that these founding officers must, initially, exercise all the organic functions of all necessary church officers. The other is, that when they had once established the full organism, no other officers could regularly claim to do the same from their example. Thus, in order that there might be a regular order of priests in the church under the dispensation of Sinai, Moses, the great prophet, must for the nonce exercise the priest's office in consecrating Aaron and his sons. But after Aaron and his sons were consecrated, Moses never presumed to sacrifice again. Nor did David. And when King Saul dared to imitate the argument of our brethren, by engrossing the inferior office of priest, he was cursed of God for the intrusion. (1 Sam. xiii. 8-14.)

Again, when it is argued that the presbyterial office is still inclusive of the diaconal, there is a strange oblivion of the third chapter of 1st Timothy. There the apostle is, plainly, ordering the frame of the church for post-apostolic times. He provides for equipping the church with two distinct orders of officers, elders and deacons. As the qualifications are distinct, so the functions. There is no more evidence here that in a fully developed church an elder may usurp diaconal functions because he has been made an elder, than that a deacon may usurp presbyterial functions because he has been made a deacon. The result of a scriptural view is, then: that in the forming state of a given church, the officers who are properly commissioned to

initiate the organization must for the time combine in themselves their own and the lower functions. But *the very object of their instituting the lower organs is*, that in due time the functions may be separated, and the anomalous mingling may cease; that the church may have its orderly and safe ulterior growth. Thus, an evangelist, preaching the gospel *in partibus infidelium*, must, at first, exercise the function of examining and admitting adult converts as full members in the visible church. Strictly, *this is a sessional*, not a *ministerial*, function. But there cannot be a session until after there is a membership; so that the evangelist is obliged to do it. But now, does it follow that every pastor, who has a session, may properly usurp this sessional function? By no means. There is not an intelligent session in the land which would tolerate such systematic intrusions.

In the next place, that Christ and the apostles designed diaconal officers not only for the local, but the combined functions of oblation and distribution of larger parts of the church, follows naturally from the truths conceded to us. The apostles did institute the diaconal office. They did assign especially to them the official management of oblation and distribution. They did assign to the presbyters the distinct functions of spiritual teaching and rule. They did command the churches to exercise the "grace of giving" statedly. And it is admitted that whenever a given congregation, as a body, exercised this grace, the receiving and distribution went naturally into the deacons' official hands. But now, both Scripture and providence call the many congregations to joint exercises of this grace of giving. Why does it not follow, that the receiving and distribution should still fall into diaconal hands, representatives of the joint congregations? How does the circumstance that many congregations, instead of one, are now exercising this grace, make it right to break across the distinction of offices, which was so proper in the single congregation, and to jumble functions which were there so properly separated?

But this is not a human inference. The New Testament unquestionably gives instances of general deacons, other than the twelve, who managed this duty of oblation and distribution, not for one church, but for many. A member did, indeed, attempt during this debate to argue from 2 Corinthians, viii. 18-23, that a preacher of the word was intrusted with the diaconal

function as soon as the oblation was a general one of many churches; but his argument was a mere begging of the question. He *assumed* that this "brother . . . chosen of the churches to travel with" Paul and Titus, "with this grace," was a preacher. This was the very point he should have *proved*. But no man can prove it. On the contrary, it is obvious that this "brother" was a general deacon. Not a single trait or title of evangelistic or preaching office is given him by Paul. He is "chosen of the churches" for the express purpose of "travelling with *this grace*;" that is to say, to collect and disburse the general oblations. He is not a presbyter, but (vs. 23) a "messenger" of the churches (a commissioner, ἀπόστολος.) The use of this title catches our brethren in the jaws of this sharp dilemma: either they must hold with us that ἀπόστολος is here used of these general deacons in the lower and modified sense of financial commissioners of the churches; or else they must open wide the door to the prelatist argument, *by admitting many apostles* (in the full sense) besides and after the Twelve. The Twelve are always "apostles of Christ;" these general deacons are "apostles (commissioners) of the churches." We have another example in Epaphroditus, Philippians ii. 25, and iv. 18, unquestionably a deacon of that church, and called their "apostle" and λειτουργός to Paul's necessities. We also have probable cases in the Romans, Andronicus and Junia (or Junius), Romans xvi. 7. Thus, the fact that this alms-receiver-general for the churches enjoyed "a praise throughout all the churches," instead of proving that he must have been a noted preacher, only shows how much better the primitive churches understood and honored the general deacon than the Christians of our day do.

The form remissional of the discussion of Dr. Girardeau's report to a future Assembly produced one result which it would be discourteous to charge as premeditated. His powerful voice was silenced in this debate, inasmuch as he was not a regular member of the Assembly. Hence but little of the truth was heard on his side, which, if advanced with clearness, would have given a very different aspect to the debate.

It would be exceedingly erroneous to suppose that the vote of almost the whole Assembly against a minority of eight, is an index and measure of the unanimity of our church in the position that our methods of committee action need and admit no

amendment. Many side influences concurred particularly against Mr. Martin and his propositions at this time. The discussion of desirable betterments is by no means ended, as time will show. This was made perfectly obvious to the observer by such facts as these: that some of Mr. Martin's principles were and are openly advocated by many men of the widest experience and influence; that after the vote, very many who voted with the majority were heard to admit that *there is room for amendments*, and that they should and must be introduced in due time, and each upon its own merits.

Dr. Adger, for instance, announced himself, not as a revolutionist, but as one who desired to *conserve and improve*. He disclaimed all sympathy with the cry for *retrenchment*; he wanted more liberal expenditures. Our church can give and ought to give every year one million of dollars. His position was equally removed from that of the rash innovator and from the arrogant and fulsome assumption that all our present methods are too near perfection to be amended. Against adopting that egotistical position, there rise in protest these great, solemn, and sad facts: that by present methods we only succeed in drawing from all our churches \$123,000 for all the Lord's work, outside of pastoral and church support, which is less than one dollar for each member; and that our present agencies yearly afflict our hearts with the complaint that half our congregations neglect all coöperation! Is this so satisfactory? Is this to remain our best attainment? And whereas all criticism has been deprecated, as tending to destroy confidence and utterly cripple existing agencies, it turns out that this year of sharp criticism has shown a considerable, though still an inadequate progress! No; free discussion is the healthy atmosphere of a free church. The surest way to arrest effort and paralyze confidence is to choke down the honest questionings of Presbyterians by a species of bureaucratic dictation, and to leave an angry mistrust brooding in silence. But our churches cannot be so dealt with; they will think and speak independently.

Power conferred on our agencies is not a subject of dread. Power is efficiency. Power is life. Power is work. But the thing always to be watched is combination, or centralization of power. Our present methods, notwithstanding all the safeguards of our former wisdom, suggest grounds of caution in these three

particulars: First, That they transfer so much of the church's home work (Education, Home Missions, etc.,) *to the Assembly*. It is the Assembly's agencies which must do everything. True, they are, by their rules, all required to act in concert with the Presbyteries; yet they are the Assembly's agencies; to the Assembly they are responsible; from it they derive their existence; to the extension of its prerogatives they instinctively lend all their practical weight. Hence, the Assembly has rolled over upon it too many of the functions which the constitution assigns to Presbyteries. There is too much blood in the head, and not enough in the members. Financial and executive work, which should be left to its proper local agencies, when thus drawn into the Assembly disqualifies this supreme court for its higher and more spiritual duties of conserving the doctrinal and moral purity and spiritual life of the church. So preoccupied is the Assembly with these engrossments of executive detail, that it has no time nor taste for other questions touching the very life of the souls of its people. But if our system hinders the efficiency of the Assembly, it likewise damages all self-development in our lower courts. The work of the Presbyteries being assumed by the Assembly, those bodies will not and cannot be expected to take its responsibility on them. Why need the Presbyteries bestir itself to raise funds for its candidates or its own Domestic Missions, when there is a great central committee of the Assembly anxious to do all that for the Presbyteries which coöperate, and ready to its power, and almost beyond its power, to meet every call properly made upon it?

But secondly, the fellow-feeling natural to these executive agencies, as children of a common mother, results in a combination of influence for each other and to resist criticism. It is not meant to charge the conscious formation of any corrupt "ring-power." The honorable disclaimers of secretaries and committee-men are fully allowed, when they declare that they have made no overt compact to defend each other. Doubtless this is perfectly true; but the tendency to combination is uncalculated and unconscious; and therefore the more a subject of solicitude. It is not the fault of the men; they are good men and true, honorable and incapable of calculated usurpations; it is the fault of the system. Yes, you have an established system of central agencies, all of which have a common life, and when you touch

one of them, all of them feel and resent it. What is there in the nature of the case to make it certain that your Education work, for example, is arranged in the best possible way? And yet, if it is proposed to make any changes therein, your Secretary of Foreign Missions, and every other secretary, will be found quick to come forward in defence of the established system.

But thirdly, while power is good, and while our *powers* might be acknowledged to be all right in themselves considered, surely it cannot be maintained that it is well to concentrate so many of them in one corner of the church. Last year at Charleston a strong effort was made to separate two of them; but to every observant eye there was a rallying of the forces which effectually prevented it. Now, do you imagine that the church is satisfied, or going to be satisfied, about this? Let this Assembly vote that *all shall remain as it is*, and will that prevent the church from repeating, in due time, her dissatisfaction with this concentration of so much power in so few hands, or in one corner of our territory?

The history of the discussion against "Boards" in the old Assembly (at Rochester, in 1860, and previously), might be instructive to us now. All of us admit that the old Board system was vicious; even unconstitutional. Yet all amendment was resisted, when urged by Dr. Thornwell and others, by just such arguments as we hear to-day, against admitting even the smaller modifications prompted by the lights of experience. Dr. Thornwell was voted down, as we shall be to-day, by a very large majority. But only a few years elapsed, when lo! the Northern Church adopted his very principles. The old Boards of one hundred members were swept away, and Executive Committees of fifteen put into their places, but wearing still the name of *Boards*. The vanquished became the victors. It may be so, to some extent, again; For our present methods still retain some of the evils which Dr. Thornwell then objected against the old ones: too much tendency to centralization; the atrophy, through disuse, of those smaller limbs of the spiritual body, the lower courts; and the transfer of diaconal functions out of diaconal hands. Dr. Adger then advocated the two measures moved by Mr. Martin.

The Rev. Mr. Quarles, of Missouri, in a long and able speech, also urged, in addition, these points: That it seems almost farcical to send a Presbytery's Home Missions money to Baltimore,

in order to send it back, at that Presbytery's demand, to pay its home-missionary; and to expend the church's money in providing for this useless migration of money checks, and in paying treasurers to do such business as this. But unless the Presbytery's will, which the rules of the Home Missions' Committee seems so fully to recognize, is to be resisted, such seems to be the useless nature of our proceeding on our present plan. Nehemiah, when he would arouse the householders in his defenceless town of Jerusalem to contribute to the building of a common wall, combined general patriotism with personal affections, by calling each man "to build over against his own dwelling." The Assembly should imitate his wisdom. The way to do this is to leave local enterprises more to local agencies and affections. Christians will give more to help *this known destitute church*, in their own Presbytery, than they will give for that vague impersonal thing, "the general destitution," a thousand miles off. Hence, it was claimed that Presbyteries acting for themselves have usually acted with more vigor, and raised more money, than those connected with the Assembly's Committee; while they have been prompt to contribute a certain portion to that committee for its frontier work.

The advocates of the majority were frequent in characterizing Mr. Martin's motions as visionary, as grounded in mere theory, and as unsupported by experience; while they claimed that theirs were sustained by the experience of seventeen years' success. This boast laid them open to a pungent rejoinder, from the damaging effect of which they seem to have been spared mainly by the forbearance of their respondents. It might have been answered: that the desire for these betterments was in the fullest sense practical and experimental, being grounded, namely, in very melancholy and pointed experiences. For instance: under the present boasted system, contributions to Education had fallen from fourteen or fifteen thousand dollars, gathered under another system, and that in the days of the church's poverty, to nine or ten thousand now. Last year the Assembly solemnly told the churches that Home Missions *must have* not less than \$40,000 this year, or most critical losses would result. The excellent secretary afflicted us by telling us that the churches only gave him \$18,000 for Home Missions. But these same churches have given \$59,250 for Foreign Missions. It is impossible to

ascribe to our people an ignorance of the plain truth, so eloquently put by Dr. Hoge in his Home Missions address: "That this cause cannot be second to any other, because the home work is the very *fulcrum* of the levers by which all other agencies seek to work for the world's salvation." Hence, their failure to respond, their seeming depreciation of the home work under the foreign in the ratio of 18 to 59, must be ascribed to the defects of our present method. And especially did the history of the Publication Committee give us a most awakening experience. For there we saw an important and costly interest committed precisely to our present boasted methods, and utterly wrecked. An eminent divine was called to usurp the diaconal functions of an accountant and distributor, for which events proved him wholly unfitted, while he sunk into abeyance those preaching duties for which he was so richly fitted, called, and ordained. The result was the total insolvency of an agency which should have been profitable and prosperous, an insolvency which was only prevented from becoming flagrant by renewed and onerous special contributions exacted from the churches. And the most significant part of this experience is in the fact that, while our present methods, claimed to be too near perfection for criticism, were maturing for us this astounding calamity, the voice of faithful warning, uttered for instance by the excellent elder, Mr. Kennedy, of Clarksville, was rebuked by precisely the arguments appealed to by the majority of to-day! "Oh! fault-findings were mischievous. They repressed contributions. They hampered meritorious officers. They impaired confidence. They should be rebuked by the actual censure of the Assembly." One would think that such an experience, so recent, should have inculcated more modesty in the majority.

There are a few more instructive thoughts bearing upon our present modes of aiding candidates for the ministry, which were not uttered in the Assembly. The Education collection is confessedly the unpopular collection with the churches. This every pastor experiences; and the scantiness of the returns attests it. But, on the other hand, we find that there is no object of philanthropy for which it is so easy to elicit liberal aid as to educate a *given and known deserving youth* for usefulness to his generation. The two facts, when coupled together, show that we have not yet gotten hold of the wisest method. Our present

method makes it hard to do what, supposing our candidates to be really meritorious, the generous Christian heart of our men of wealth would make exceedingly easy. The money which, in all proper individual instances, comes easiest, we now make to come hardest. The mistake is obvious. Instead of presenting to the Christian heart the known concrete case of the highly deserving young brother, we present that impersonal and suspected abstraction, the unknown body of "indigent candidates." In fine, the aid rendered should, in each case, be grounded, not on the candidate's indigence, but *on his merit*. It should be given him as the well-earned reward of diligence, self-improvement, and self-devotion. It would then stimulate and ennoble the beneficiary, instead of galling him.

We venture to predict that the church will finally concur in these conclusions, as to the various subjects agitated :

1. That unpaid committees without paid secretaries can never maintain in their vigor our various agencies for the world's conversion. There will be too strong an application of the old maxim : "What is everybody's business will be nobody's business." Such an attempt would be too wide a departure from that ordering of human nature and providence which fits the energetic few to lead and the many to follow.

2. To direct and energize one of these works as executive head of its committee, is a work neither prelatie in its claims, nor derogatory to the ordination-vows of a preacher of the word. But the mere diaconal functions attending these agencies should be transferred, as fast as practicable, to the more suitable hands of deacons *and deaconesses*; the latter furnishing the church the most quick, intelligent, and economical service, probably, in this direction. Thus the secretaries will be released from pursuits heterogeneous from their calling, to devote their energies to their proper evangelistic tasks in organizing the spread of the gospel by tongue and pen and press.

3. Some of these works, as that of Foreign Missions, will always be mainly under the control of the Assembly, by its committees. But those home enterprises in which the Presbyteries can act directly should be remitted to them. This will economise expenze, prevent undue centralization, and leave the hands of the secretaries, who will still be needed, free to do

work more useful to the church than the engrossment of functions belonging to the Presbyteries.

4. An economy which would prove "penny wise and pound foolish" would be the poorest economy. Yet, it is a sacred duty of the Assembly to see that working-expenses are reduced to the lowest safe *ratio*, because the money handled is sacred, in most cases the gift of poverty and self-denial, to God, and every dollar needlessly diverted to the mere expenses of administration is so much taken from the salvation of perishing souls.

The Assembly of 1881 was happy in having but one judicial case before it. This was the appeal of Mr. Turner, of the Central Church in Atlanta, against the Synod of Georgia. He had been cited by his session to answer to charges of fraud and untruthfulness in the prosecution of his secular business. The testimony adduced did not substantiate these charges. But the session deemed that there was such proof of heedlessness as justified a serious admonition. In this admonition Mr. Turner acquiesced. A few days after he asked his dismissal to join the Methodist communion. The session refused this, on the ground that he was not "in good standing," inasmuch as admonition leaves the admonished member somehow in a species of probation with the session as to his standing, to be continued virtually at the session's option; and that even a member in good standing cannot demand dismissal to another communion as a right, but must ask it of the option and courtesy of the session. These were the points raised by the appeal. In both the Assembly properly decided against the lower courts. It held that a mere admonition is a species of church censure which completes and exhausts itself when administered, if received with docility. To hold the contrary virtually raises it to a higher grade of censure, that of indefinite suspension, at the option of the session. But this is a distinct and a graver censure. To construe an admonition thus would punish the culprit twice under the same indictment, and the second time without trial. As to the second point, the Assembly decided, with those of 1839 and 1851, that no member of the Presbyterian Church can claim, as of right, a "letter of dismissal" to another communion; but a member who is "in good standing,"

is always entitled to a "certificate of good standing," whenever he asks it. If he is found to have used it to institute membership in another denomination, then his name is simply to be removed from our rolls. And this is not an act of resentment or censure; but simply the logical sequel, with us, of his own exercise of inalienable private judgment, in electing another church connection.

The interests of Columbia Seminary filled a large place in the attention, and a larger in the heart, of the Assembly. The important points in the Directors' report were:

1. The request that the immediate government of the Seminary be remanded to the Synods of South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, the Assembly retaining its right of review over its proceedings, and a *reto* over the election of professors and teachers. This was unanimously conceded.

2. The Directors propose to reopen the Seminary in the autumn, with at least three professors. They brought the gratifying news, that a large part of the endangered or suspended investments have been regained, that thirty thousand dollars have been actually paid in for new investments, besides numerous subscriptions still outstanding; so that the institution will have the use of a cash endowment of \$ from this date; which, besides the Perkins foundation, will liberally support three other professors. The Assembly, of course, cordially encouraged the Board to go forward, and reopen the institution at once.

3. The Directors, in conjunction with the Presbyterian Church in Columbia, now vacant, have formed and do now submit to the Assembly the purpose of recalling Dr. B. M. Palmer from the First church in New Orleans, to the professorship of Practical Divinity in the Seminary, and the pastorate of his old charge. The Board regards these as essential parts of their own plan. Everything, in the first place, cries aloud for the immediate reopening of the Seminary, chiefly the great and growing destitution of ministers in the South and West especially; but also the progressive loss of influence for the Seminary as long as it remains closed; the dispersion of the students of divinity of those sections, and their resort to institutions without the bounds of our Church; the evident use made of this season of suspension to undermine the independence of our beloved

Church. It is, therefore, vital that the Seminary be restored to activity.

But, in the second place, the same considerations demand that it be restored to a vigorous activity. A feeble existence would prove wholly inadequate to gain the vital ends in view. Hence it is for the highest interests of the church, that her best men and best talents be devoted to rehabilitating this school of pastors. But from this point of view, every eye and every hand points naturally to Dr. Palmer, the former professor, the expastor of the Columbia Church, as the one man who is able to give the necessary impulse to the Seminary. He has labored long and hard in the most onerous pastoral positions; his experience is ripe; his age has reached that stage when his bodily vigor, adequate to many more years of efficiency in the more quiet academic walks, may be expected to flag under the enormous strains of a metropolitan charge such as his. This consideration goes far to counterpoise our sense of his great importance to New Orleans and the Southwest, and our sympathy with the grief of a bereaved charge there.

These views, eloquently advanced by the representatives of the Seminary, Drs. Girardeau and Mack, proved so influential that the Assembly approved the action of the Board in electing Dr. Palmer, by a large majority; the dissentients being the immediate representatives of the city and Synods which would lose him. But while the Assembly cordially sanctioned Dr. Palmer's return to the Seminary, should his own sense of duty lead him thither, its courtesy towards his church and immediate associates in the Southwest prevented it from applying any urgency to his mind.

Two other topics claimed the attention of the Assembly, in connection with theological education, which were despatched during the later sessions of the Assembly. One was the report brought to that body by the representatives of Columbia Seminary, touching the resort of many of the candidates to seminaries without our bounds. Drs. Girardeau and Mack stated that, when compelled to close the Seminary for a time, they had urgently exhorted their pupils to resort to Union Seminary in Virginia, as their natural and proper place, and as offering them the most efficient instruction, until their own school was reopened. Six had done so, but fifteen had resorted to Princeton Seminary.

Indeed, adding those in other Northern and Scotch institutions, we find this anomalous state of affairs : that about one-third of all our candidates in their theological course received last winter their tuition from institutions of the denominations which have chosen to take the positions of accusers of our church and opposers of its cherished principles !

It appeared also, that in every case, so far as known, inducements had been held out to these candidates, in the form of money assistance, to leave their own institutions. A very specious explanation was given, indeed, of this measure. It was said that several of the scholarships in Princeton Seminary had been endowed, in more prosperous times, by Southern donors, and that it seemed magnanimous for the North, rich and powerful, to offer the incomes of these foundations to the children of the South, in their poverty. This offer was coupled with no condition whatever, nor requirement of adhesion to the Northern Church.

Of the latter fact there can be no doubt ; the managers of this measure are too adroit to commit so useless a blunder. They understand too well the force of Solomon's maxim, that "a gift blindeth the eyes of the wise." They appreciate the silent, steady, but potent influence of association on mind and character, and expect that the young, ill-informed, as the young men and women of the South already are, of the historical facts, the rights, the injuries, and the true position of Southern Christians, will surely absorb all the contempt for those principles they desire, during a three years' immersion in a sea of unfair and erroneous literature, preaching, and conversation. It is a safe calculation that, if we are stupid enough to allow the enemies of our church to train its leaders, we must be soon undermined and destroyed. Some who have acted in this matter may warmly disclaim such views ; and their disclaimer may be candid. We are far from surmising that there are no men in the church of our assailants and conquerors really generous and magnanimous towards us. But various shades of motive may mingle. A professor naturally desires the *éclat* of numbers. Princeton naturally desires to retrieve her prime position in her own church, now eclipsed by her New School rival, Union Seminary in New York ; and as Princeton's commanding numbers were largely recruited, in the days of the Alexanders, from the South, she desires to gain the

land now, by drawing students from the same fields. But that Northern Presbyterians do approve and practice these seductions of our candidates from the more insidious motives, we should be silly indeed to doubt, in the face of such proofs as these: that we find officers of our own church, disaffected to us, furnished in advance with these bids for our candidates, and authorized to buy, in the open market, any comer; that we hear Northern ministers openly profess the purpose, and boast that five years of such success as the last will seal the overthrow of the Southern Church; that those who are laboring to reinstate Columbia Seminary have actually met opposition to their pious and holy enterprise, inspired from this source, and by the undoubted motive of undermining our church through the final destruction of this institution. The insolence of this latter tactic, especially, inspires in every right mind nothing but indignation; and we profess none of that unchristian hypocrisy which pretends to make a virtue of suppressing its honest, manly expression.

Now it might appear at the first view that there is a remedy for this counterplotting, which is of the easiest possible application. This would be to advertise all our candidates that they have no earthly occasion to go abroad in order to receive any such assistance as they ought to desire in paying for a theological course. Their own institutions are abundantly able to give this assistance to all comers. No young man who deserves to be helped has ever found it necessary to leave a Southern seminary for lack of suitable pecuniary assistance. The boards and faculties stand pledged that none such shall ever go away from this cause. If, then, money is the inducement, the church might say to all its candidates who need this species of help: "Here is the money ready for you at home; there is no occasion to go abroad for it."

Why does not this suffice? For two reasons: our church wisely places a limit upon the amount of aid given to each one; because, regarding the candidate's exercise of personal energy, independence, and self-help, as essential *criteria* of fitness for the ministry, she ordains that her candidates shall be *assisted* and *encouraged*, but not *bodily carried*. Her own officers, professors, and directors are bound to obey this excellent rule. But these bidders for our candidates from without disregard it, and offer larger pecuniary inducements. Thus the double injury and

insult is wrought of breaking down a rule which our church has wisely established, and of interfering between her and her own children. The other reason is suggested by the whisper that the student who goes abroad also gains a much easier time; he reads easier text-books; less research is exacted of him; slighter examinations await him; looser scholastic and ecclesiastical restraints are held over him. Thus, after a course of light and superficial study, he can return to his mother-church—unless a fatter salary and more distinguished position invite him to desert her wholly—and still pass for a learned theologian, in virtue of that peculiarly Southern tendency to esteem “*omne ignotum pro mirifico*.” Now, we avow that, to our mind, the latter inducement appears more degrading and mischievous than the former. Thorough study, diligent labor in the theological course, righteous responsibilities—these mean, simply, more efficiency in the pastoral work and in saving souls. The man who has a desire to evade these in order to secure an easier life with more superficial results, proves by that desire that *he is not fit to preach Christ's gospel*. The man who really desires to glorify him, desires to glorify him much; and he will never pause to barter away a portion of his Saviour's honor for this ignoble self-indulgence.

It was, therefore, with a timely wisdom that the Assembly took action on this matter. It did not advocate the narrow spirit which, pronouncing our own culture in every case all-sufficient for ourselves, refuses the aid of the learning of other peoples and countries altogether. But it declared that, as to those who may properly go abroad to complete their culture, the suitable time is after they have grounded themselves in the principles and scholarship of their own land. The Assembly therefore urgently requested the Presbyteries not to allow any candidates to go abroad into the schools of other denominations until they have completed the course offered them in their own Seminaries.

A most important modification in our theological education was also proposed in a strong memorial from Bethel Presbytery, S. C. This proposed, in substance, that while the present *curriculum* of preparation should be retained, and even extended, for such students as desire and have time for it, an English course of theology, exposition, and history, shall be taught for

others, without requiring either Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. This, of course, contemplated the licensing and ordaining of ministers upon this English course. The main plea urged was from the extent of the harvest and fewness of reapers. The comparatively slow growth and small numbers of the Presbyterian body were ascribed to the difficulties our system imposes on the multiplication of ministers; while the rapid growth of the Immersionists, Methodists, and others, was accounted for by the facility with which pious and efficient men can rise to the ministry in those communions. It was urged also, that such an English course, added to piety, zeal, and good sense, would suffice to give us thoroughly respectable and efficient pastors. There was even a virtual attack upon the more learned training; where it was charged that it led the students rather around about than into the Bible, which should be the pastor's great text-book, and that our classical candidates, while well posted in the languages, were often found by their Presbyteries more ignorant of their English Bibles than intelligent laymen.

The committee on Seminaries, to whom this overture was sent, could not but find that it proposed a virtual change in the constitution. It therefore recommended the Assembly to answer, that the object of Bethel Presbytery could only be gained by moving the Presbyteries, in the orderly way, to change the constitutional rules for trying candidates for licensure and ordination. The friends of the overture, in order to evade this fatal objection, then moved the Assembly in due form to send down the proposition to the Presbyteries for their vote. This the Assembly, after debate, declined to do, by a vote of 55 to 37.

To the aspiration for a more rapid way to multiply ministers no pious heart can fail to respond; it is but the echo of our Saviour's words; "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest." But to multiply them by encouraging those who feel the call to content themselves with an inefficient and shallow preparation is another thing. In making a comparison between the growth of our church and of those who permit an uneducated ministry, large allowances must be made for the instability of a very large part of the accessions counted, and even of the congregations organized; the heterogeneous nature of those large communion rolls; and the mixture and incorrectness of the doctrinal views held. If these deductions were made, it would not appear so

plain that the solid growth of these denominations is so much more rapid than of our own. Again, the change proposed would place us substantially in the attitude, as to a learned ministry, held by the Cumberland Presbyterians. It is, then, the plainest dictate of practical wisdom, that we shall ask ourselves whether we should gain by exchanging our present condition for theirs. Again, the standard of devotion set up by Christ for every Christian, and especially every minister, is that he shall not only purpose to serve his Lord, but serve him *his best*. Hence, the preliminary question for every man called of God must be whether the classical and biblical training prescribed in our constitution is really promotive of a minister's *best* efficiency. If it is, the same devotion which prompts him to preach at all must prompt him to desire this furniture for preaching better; and if it is attainable, must prompt him to acquire it. But the position taken by our church is, that to every man called of God to preach *it shall be attainable*. She will help all who are worthy of help. Nor has her pledge to do so been yet dishonored. Here, then, is the ideal which we would present, in place of the one so graphically painted in the Bethel overture: that aspirations of good men to preach should be as frequent and as readily multiplied among us as among Immersionists or Methodists; but that the teeming crowd of aspirants should be led, not to a rash and ill-furnished entrance on their public work, but to this best preparation; while the unstinted sympathy and help of their brethren should make their entrance into a learned ministry just as practicable for every one of them, as the entrance into an unlearned ministry is to the Immersionist; that is, supposing in all the aspirants a true zeal and devotion; and without these, their aspirations would prove deceptive under every system.

The contrast between the candidate pretending classical training, but ignorant of his Bible, and the plain man of God, mighty in his English Scriptures, contains an illusion. How comes that classical scholar to leave the seminary ignorant of his Bible? Is a knowledge of the languages of inspiration, in its nature, obstructive of Bible knowledge? Surely not! Then the imperfect result must be due to the fact that this classical man has indolently neglected his better opportunities to know his Bible. Now, will the offering of another man worse opportunities ensure

him against indolence? Suppose the student of this two years' English course infected with a similar negligence to that detected in the classical student, where will the former's line of acquirement be? When his indolence shall have sunk him relatively as far below his lower standard, will not his acquirements be contemptible? In a word, the expectation claimed is founded on a tacit assumption that, while many candidates pursuing the learned course are unfaithful to their better opportunities, and so exhibit inferior results, all the candidates pursuing the lower course will be models of exemplary fidelity and industry. Does the church see any guarantee of such superior spiritual principles in these men, in the fact that they have deliberately elected a less perfect way of serving Christ in the pulpit? We confess we do not.

A similar illusion harbors in the argument so often drawn from the primitive preachers ordained by the Apostles. These, it is said, were but plain, sensible, business men, soundly converted, taught of the Holy Ghost, and set apart to preach without other qualifications than these, with Christian experience and "aptness to teach." They were required to study no foreign language, no *curriculum* of science. We grant it. Let us represent to ourselves such a good plain man, in Ephesus, ordained during Timothy's days there; probably like Alexander, a mere coppersmith. But this plain good man had as his vernacular the Greek language, one of the languages of inspiration. He was, by his own experience, practically conversant with that whole set of events, of miracles, of religious ideas and institutions, pagan and Jewish, which are perpetually involved in the explication and illustration of gospel truths in the Scriptures. Here, with his long experience of divine grace in his own heart, his reputation for devout piety and integrity, and his forcible gift of utterance, was his sufficient furniture for the pastoral office.

But now, let us remember that to us of this nineteenth century that Greek language is a dead, a learned language. All those facts and ideas which constituted that man's practical, popular intelligence, are to us now *archæology*! They are the science of antiquity. How much study of the classics and history will it require to place a sprightly American youth simply on a level, in these respects, with that plain Ephesian? We may find an answer by asking, were that Ephesian raised from the dead

among us to-day, only furnished with his Greek language and ideas, how much study would he have to undergo to become equal to this American youth in his mastery of the English language and our contemporary knowledge? Does the most thorough seminary course put its graduate on a level with that good Ephesian brass-smith, in his Greek and his Asiatic archæology? We wish it did. We devoutly wish we could reach that level.

But does the apostolic example, in ordaining a plain Greek artisan, permit us to fall below it?

One of the most responsible tasks of the Assembly was to receive and digest the remarks of the Presbyteries upon the Revised Directory for Worship. It was found that sixty-six Presbyteries had complied with the last Assembly's order to examine and amend it. A few had expressed their wish that the work should be dropped, and their preference for the old Directory. Evidence appeared that some of the sixty-six judged the same, but examined and amended the revision only out of courtesy to the Assembly. All the reports of Presbyteries having been referred to the Revising Committee, that body, with commendable diligence, immediately digested them, and made the following report:

"The Committee appointed to revise the Directory of Worship hope that they are able now to present the Revision in a much improved form. Their effort last year was, of course, only *tentative*. They were well aware that all they could produce of themselves must only serve as a basis on which it must be for the Presbyteries to build—a skeleton into which they must breathe life, and which they must cover with flesh and clothe with beauty. A number of the Presbyteries have devoted themselves with zeal and ability to this business; and the work under their skilful manipulations will be found, the Committee trust, much more acceptable to the church.

"The changes made at the suggestion of the Presbyteries are numerous. The chief ones are an alteration in the order of the last four chapters, and the omission of all forms, except the one prepared for a funeral occasion where no minister is present. All forms having been omitted, your Committee do not think it necessary to retain the Note about forms, which many Presbyteries desired to have inserted in the body of the Directory. As the Committee has left out the forms, it has left out the note.

"We have to report that a copy of the Revision, as it now stands, is ready for the Assembly to dispose of as it may judge best. The Committee very respectfully suggests that if this body can afford the time necessary, and consider it advisable, the Revision in its present form be now read aloud, that the Assembly may judge of the improvement. But if, on the other hand, this be not the pleasure of the body, your Committee would then suggest that the Revision be recommitted to be printed, and one copy sent to every minister, one to every session, and two copies

to every clerk of Presbytery; and that the Presbyteries be directed to take up the work again for a fresh examination, and report the results to the next Assembly.

(Signed)

JOHN B. ADGER, *Chairman*,

B. M. PALMER,

THOS. E. PECK,

J. A. LEFEVRE,

G. D. ARMSTRONG,

W. W. HENRY."

The Assembly gave the Revision this direction.

The Committee of Foreign Correspondence reported :

1. An overture from Holston Presbytery asking that appointments to the General Presbyterian Council be distributed more equally through the church, at least one to each Synod; and that Synods make the nominations.

The committee recommended the Assembly to answer that it had no power to regulate the action of the Assembly of 1883 which has to make these appointments; but might express the opinion that they should be distributed so as to represent our church, and that Synods might be invited to nominate.

2. A request from the Council aforesaid for a small standing committee, with which clerks of the Council could correspond. The Assembly appointed its two clerks.

3. An overture from the Synod of Texas asking the Assembly to appoint a committee to confer with a similar committee of the Northern Assembly so that the two churches might avoid conflicts in their labors in Texas.

The committee recommended that the Assembly express its earnest desire that brethren of the Northern and Southern churches in Texas should endeavor to avoid such conflicts, and cultivate peace; but refer all such questions back to our Presbyteries in Texas, to whom they properly belong; at the same time recommending the Synod of Texas, in a way merely advisory, to seek to promote the ends of charity and edification.

4. The committee nominated for principal delegate to the General Synod of the Reformed Church the Rev. Miles Saunders, and for alternate delegate the Rev. John A. Scott.

5. A telegram being committed to this committee from the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States and British Provinces conveying Christian greeting to the Assembly, and referring to Ephesians i. 3, the committee reported an answer conveying to the Association the Assembly's Christian

salutations and referring the Association to Ephesians i. 4 and 5. Objection was made to the answer, as likely to prove offensive, and it was recommitted. Subsequently the committee reported, that on further reflection, it had grave doubts whether the Assembly ought to exchange formal salutations with any other than *ecclesiastical* bodies ; but that as in this particular case, the matter had gone so far, it recommended that the Assembly should reply by "commending the Young Men's Association to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Upon the subject let us remark : 1. That the doubts of the committee appear to us to have a good foundation. If we are to go outside of ecclesiastical bodies with this exchange of salutations, where is it to stop ?

2. It seems to us that if an answer were to be given to the greetings of the Association, none could have been more *appropos* than what the committee prepared at first. The objection to it was, that a Calvinistic passage of Scripture could not be quoted to a body in which there might be some Arminians without offence. To this the answer is pertinent : 1, That the Association is not a body of Methodists ; 2, That Methodists receive that passage of Scripture as not contradicting any doctrine held by them, having their own way of expounding it, and that in fact, for the Assembly to signify by its action that a Methodist body could not tolerate two verses of one of Paul's epistles, was to be indeed offensive to those Christian brethren ; (3), That if the committee of correspondence had gone about to hunt up that passage, the objections made might have applied ; but that, as the young men had quoted only the first verse of the passage, stopping short where there was no period, there could be fairly found no ground of complaint for our merely completing the quotation, and returning them the remainder of the passage, with our salutations.

We must add, however, that this whole business of shooting off passages of Scripture at one another is not to our taste.

Our readers know that certain deliverances of the Louisville and Charleston Assemblies, respecting cases *in thesi*, led to some discussion in the Synod of South Carolina, out of which grew an overture to the Assembly. This asked the supreme court, substantially, to declare that propositions drawn "by good and

necessary consequence" from the constitutional law of the church by our supreme court have the binding force of law until constitutionally repealed. On this overture, the Committee on Bills and Overtures made a report on Friday night. On Saturday morning the Rev. Dr. Palmer offered the following paper in place of that acted upon by the Assembly the previous night, regarding the overture from the Synod of South Carolina. It was fully discussed by Rev. Drs. Lefevre, Mullally, Hoyt, Pratt, Molloy, Armstrong, Davies, and Shanks, and was adopted by an almost unanimous vote. The paper reads as follows, viz.:

"To the overture from the Synod of South Carolina the Assembly returns answer that all just and necessary consequences from the law of the church are part of the same in the logical sense of being implicitly contained therein. The authority of this law is, however, twofold. It binds all those who profess to live under it as a covenant by which they are united in one communion, so that there is no escape from its control, except by renouncing its jurisdiction; and it binds because it has been accepted as a true expression of what is revealed in the Holy Scriptures as infalible truth.

"The consequences deduced from it cannot, therefore, be equal in authority with the law itself, unless they be necessarily contained within it, as shown by their agreement also with the Divine Word."

This debate showed that harmony of opinion has not yet been reached on this vexed question. The paper finally adopted is a compromise, and is still ambiguous. It says, consequences deduced from the constitution must be shown to be necessarily contained in it, by their also agreeing with the Divine Word. But the question whether the deductions so agree is itself a question of construction. The difficulty reappears. Its obstinate reappearance, after the almost unanimous compromise, indicates that a church government at once free and Presbyterian, as opposed to the mere advisory action of congregational associations, cannot be excogitated without admitting the principle claimed by the South Carolina Synod. Let us, however, glance at the debate. The side opposed to the overture cannot be better set forth than in the remarks of Dr. Lefevre.

Dr. Lefevre, in several short speeches, fully admitted that a just inference from given propositions was truly involved in the propositions themselves, but denied that logical inferences from the laws of the church, as contained in our standards, were themselves laws, and binding on the ecclesiastical conscience with the authority of the standards themselves. He affirmed that it is

the doctrine of our Confession, and of all Protestant churches, that nothing can be made *law* in the church but the Scriptures themselves, and immediate consequences justly derived from them. He contended that our standards were indeed a system of propositions justly derived from Scripture, and adequate for their purpose—that is, to be a bond of ecclesiastical union—and therefore binding the consciences of all those who have covenanted together on this basis, so that their only escape from the obligation is by withdrawal from our communion. But he contended that the standards were, by universal concession, not pure and complete truth, like Holy Scripture, but necessarily somewhat deficient and disproportionate, and therefore unfitted to serve, in turn, as satisfactory premises for new conclusions having the authority of *law*. These new conclusions not only might be, but in many cases would be, more deficient and disproportionate and far less conformable to Scripture than the propositions from which they were drawn. The full and strict authority of the law must stop with the law itself, or we shall have an endless concatenation of logical inferences, at each successive step farther and farther removed from Scripture, until at last we are as far from the Bible as Rome herself.

In this there is unquestionable force. This right of construing a constitutional covenant *may be abused*; it may be so exercised as to infringe the spiritual liberty of members. But the compromise admits, even Dr. Lefevre admits, that the power to construe is unavoidable, to some extent. Where, then, is the remedy? Where the ultimate protection for the member's rights and freedom? In his privilege of seceding whenever he feels himself vitally aggrieved, seceding without molestation or persecution. This is the principle, too much neglected in the discussion. The principles of our constitution are: that we acknowledge our Synods and Assemblies, like all others, to be uninspired and fallible; that each man's entrance into our particular branch of the church-catholic is his free act, and that he has an inalienable right to go out of ours into some other branch, at the dictate of his own conscience; for we never held that our branch is the only valid one; that when a member exercises this right of secession, we have no right to restrain him by any civil pain or penalty whatsoever, nor to revenge his departure by any excommunication from the church catholic, nor by any denun-

ciation even. Hence, if a church, in the exercise of its unavoidable power to enact and interpret its own constitutional compact, should "err in making the terms of communion too narrow; yet, even in this case, they would not infringe upon the liberty or the rights of others, but only make an improper use of their own."

That the safeguard of the member's liberty is *here*, and not in the denial of a right of construction to the supreme court, appears very simply from this fact. All admit that the express propositions of our constitution have the binding force of law on us, while we remain Presbyterians. But it is just as possible for a fallible church court to err in enacting a proposition as in stating an obvious corollary. This is indisputable. Suppose the former error committed, where is the shield of the member's liberty? Ultimately, only in his right of unmolested secession.

But that the supreme court *must possess* a power of construction of the articles of the constitutional compact, whether liable to abuse or not, may be made exceedingly clear. The only alternative is Congregationalism. The constitution itself gives this power: "to *decide* questions of doctrine and order regularly brought before it." The strictest opponents of the validity of "*in thesi* declarations" admit it; for they concede that when the Assembly sits judicially and interprets an article of the constitution *in hypothesis*, its decision is law. But surely, the Assembly's passing into its judicial functions has no influence to make its logical inferences infallible. It may also err *in hypothesis*; yet, it is admitted its conclusions *in hypothesis* are law. This granted, the admission that the Assembly may err *in thesi* is not sufficient to prove that such conclusions cannot be law. Again, it is an admitted maxim, that "the meaning of an instrument is the instrument." Who shall deduce that meaning? Each one for himself, or that court which the constitutional compact has set up as the common umpire? Again, that the Assembly must have some such power of construction appears thus: the propositions set down expressly in any constitution, however detailed, must be limited in number. But the concrete cases of human action to be judged thereby are almost infinite in number, and endlessly diversified in their particular conditions. Hence there must be a process of construction, to be performed by some court, in order to show whether these varied cases come under the principle of the law. Again, in point of

fact, our constitution, in the fullest details of the Larger Catechism, fails to mention many actions which no church court in Christendom would now hesitate about disciplining. Under the Sixth Command, it does not prohibit duelling nor obstructing the passage of a railroad car. (The Westminster Assembly had never dreamed there would be railroads.) Under the Eighth, it does not mention forging bank checks, nor trafficking in "futures" in a stock or cotton exchange, under the head of "wasteful gaming." Yet rumor says, that in one of our church courts a member was censured for buying "cotton futures." But our book does mention "usury" as against the Eighth Commandment; and every church court allows its members to take usury up to *six per cent.*! Now, it may be replied, that in all these cases it is perfectly clear to every mind the actions named are or are not breaches of the principles of the commands. This is true. Yet *they are not expressed* in our constitution; whence it is clear that some constructive process of logic is employed to bring them under it. It is a constructive process which is obvious and conclusive; and therefore it gives a valid law. Just so. But every court, exercising its power of construction, will hold that its process is equally logical. So that we come again to the inexorable issues: that this right of construction *must be conceded* to the supreme court, and yet that *it may be abused*. Well, what does this mean? Simply, that no institution, not even our Presbyterianism, can become a perfect machine in human hands; but that this Presbyterianism, liable to possible perversion, is better than Congregationalism; and that, if the "worst comes to the worst," the scriptural safeguard for our spiritual liberty is to be found, not in the corrupting license of Congregationalism, but in the individual right of withdrawal.

The Assembly signalized its close by creating a new Synod, that of Florida. Let us hope that this measure will give all of that impulse to the cause of Christ in the "flowery land" which its advocates hope from it.

At 2½ o'clock P. M. Saturday, the sessions were finally closed, and the members began to disperse to their homes. The next Assembly meets in Atlanta, Ga.

A THOROUGHLY EDUCATED MINISTRY.¹

AT first thought we are surprised to find that the best established principles should need reconsideration and resetting in every age. Yet the explanation is not difficult. Some new pressure of circumstances, or some trait of mind in a part of the new generation, gives renewed prominence to the old objections against the settled principle, and temporarily overshadows the more weighty reasons for it. For every practical question has two sides, *contras* as well as *pros*. Then, it is forgotten that those objections were as maturely considered as they now are by us, when our fathers determined the system for us, and were properly overborne by the affirmative considerations. We are tempted to think that the contrary reasons have never been regarded as they deserve to be, and that we have a new light on the subject, until our innovating experiments, by their failure, teach us again that our predecessors had really looked more thoroughly around the subject than we had. Such a process has been for some months engaging a part of our church, as to the general requirement of a thorough and classical education of our ministers. The two awakening essays which appeared in the October and January numbers of this *Review*, entitled "An Inquiry into the Aggressiveness of Presbyterianism," are not the only outgivings of this movement. The overture of the Bethel Presbytery, pleading for a ministry without any classical acquirements, and other declarations, evince the unsettled mind of many. Our discussion, therefore, does not derive its whole importance from the wide attention which the brilliancy, force and plausibility of those essays are exciting.

The most of the points, so well made in them, we concede. Aggressiveness ought to be a prime trait of every church, and test of its fidelity; for what else is her great commission from her

¹ The above appeared in *The Southern Presbyterian Review* for April, 1883, and was written in reply to an article in the same periodical for October, 1882, and January, 1883, entitled "An Inquiry into the Aggressiveness of Presbyterianism."

Lord, except a command to be aggressive until she has conquered the whole world? She ought to be able to reach the poorest and lowest. Presbyterial supervision ought to be wiser and more effective. There is a startling lack of ministers, calling in trumpet tones upon Christian men. Looseness in examining candidates, false and deceptive verdicts of a scholarship which does not exist, and literary indolence in the applicants, are painfully inconsistent with our rules and professions. The practical relations of our seminaries to our Presbyteries are most anomalous and mischievous. Our constitution, though of well proved wisdom, is not inspired, and therefore its betterment is not impossible. In our author's pungent presentation of these points, we heartily rejoice. The one point on which we take issue with him is his proposal to revolutionize our system of training ministers, in order to overtake our aggressive work more rapidly.

The argument for this proposal is drawn from a comparison of our numbers in the four Southern Atlantic States with the numbers of the Baptist and Methodist Churches in the same regions. The allegation is that they, no older than we on this ground, have each made fivefold progress over us, in number of ministers and members. This fivefold growth is ascribed mainly to the facility and speed with which they multiply ministers and cheapen their labor, by reason of their not requiring classical education of them. The inference is, that we must imitate those denominations, so far as to cease to require—though we shall still invite—such training of our candidates. The author thinks that we need ministers whose grades shall differ in this sense, to perform the different kinds of missionary and pastoral work.

First, the fact assumed needs inquiry. Is it true that each of these denominations has done five times as much real work for Christ and souls as our own? Our author claims this, and rather dogmatically forbids us to go behind their statistics, or to deduct any more from them than from our own, for inaccuracies. It is impossible for sensible men, acquainted with stubborn facts, to submit here. Our own statistics may be loose; but theirs are doubtless far looser. This could not but result from the independency of the Immersionist churches, and from the notorious facility with which the Methodists demit or resume their church membership. Are all the hundreds of their "local preachers," in any continuous sense, laboring in the ministry? Is not the

country notoriously sprinkled over with members who have not been to the Lord's table for years, whose families frequent no church or Sabbath-school?

But both denominations have become far more numerous than ours. We freely admit it; yet we do not admit that this has been the result of the inferiority of our system of rearing our ministry. Twenty other solutions of their success are listed; and but little influence seems to be assigned to any of them—none at all to the most—by our author. The really influential causes of their comparative numerical growth do not appear in his list.

One is, the broad scriptural catholicity of the Presbyterian Church. It is the most liberal of all churches, receiving all true penitents to membership, of all shades of doctrinal opinion, having no *shibboleth*, communing with all, unchurching none, who teach the essential rudiments of salvation. Now, everybody condemns other people's *bigotry*; yet every carnal man is naturally a bigot as soon as he ceases to be a mere indifferentist. Hence, this wide catholicity of our church is an obstacle to her popularity with the carnal, because she firmly refuses to give them this gratification of pride and dogmatism, or to allure them by any partisan bait; but holds out only the pure and enlightened love of the holy truth of the gospel. It is well known, indeed, that this adverse world is in the habit of calling the Presbyterian the most bigoted church, at least next to the Popish. People think so, because she sternly refuses to cater to their secret bigotry.

But a second influence is more potent: our church presents to the world the humbling doctrines of the gospel with faithful candor: man's death in sin and inability for all spiritual good; his entire dependence on efficacious grace; the demands of a perfect law; God's eternal and essential punitive justice; the worthlessness of man's works and sentiments for his justification; the everlasting doom of contumacious sin. These are the doctrines which carnal man hates. He also dreads perdition. Yes, with a selfish dread. And therefore is he charmed with any theory of redemption which takes off any part of the edge of these hated truths, and yet makes plausible promise of escape. The Methodist church is avowedly Arminian, and the Immersionists are partially so; the independency of the latter has borne its usual fruit, the partial relaxation of the old Calvinism of the denomina-

tion. Arminianism is semi-Pelagianism, repolished and reconstructed. There are a few modern improvements. These were probably intended by Mr. Wesley to make a compromise between the Arminianism of Episcopius, Grotius, and Whitby, and Calvinism. But there is no compromise. The attempt to patch the old garment with new cloth only results in a lack of consistent juncture in the Wesleyan theology, which gives occasion, in that church, for all the shades of preaching, from moderate Calvinism down to almost blank Pelagianism, according to the personal impulses of the ministers.

Again, in competition with the Immersionist churches, Presbyterianism meets a capital disadvantage in scripturally refusing to countenance any shade of ritualism. She does not permit her sacraments to be misunderstood on that point by any one. Everybody comprehends, as to her, that she sternly rejects every plan for manipulating sinners into a state of salvation by a ceremony; that she refuses to allow any process less arduous than that of a living faith, a deep repentance, including "the full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience," and a holy striving in duty and life-long watchfulness. It is true that all better Immersionists profess to discard ritualism also in their dipping; but in spite of their disclaimers, the inordinate importance given to that form, with their close communion, practically encourage both a ritualistic and an exclusive temper. To the carnal, and even the partially sanctified heart, it is very seductive to find one's self exalted by a *shibboleth* and a ceremony into a spiritual aristocracy, sitting nearer God's throne than other Christians. This powerful attraction Presbyterianism will not and cannot use.

But doubtless the chief cause of the numerical spread of the other churches, and especially among the ruder classes, is the employment of "new measures." These, the anxious-seat, the altar of penitents, and others, known as "revival measures," have hitherto been almost universally used by Methodists, and generally by Immersionists. They are as influential as they are deleterious. They cater to the strongest passions of the sinful heart. By parading in public the vivid, and often the hysterical, emotions of penitents, and especially of females, they offer to the populace that spectacular excitement which is as fascinating to them as bodily intoxication, and draws the gaping crowd as powerfully as a hanging, a horse-race, or a pugilistic battle.

These measures also engage the passion of sympathy, a passion as universal as it is misunderstood. They allure the awakened carnal mind, by flattering it with the permission, yea, the direct encouragement, to adopt a gust of sympathetic excitement, a fit of carnal remorse, with the calm of the natural collapse which succeeds it, and a shallow, spurious hope, in lieu of that thorough work of mortifying sin and crucifying self along with Christ, which, we teach, alone evidences a title to heaven. No wonder that these "measures" have been found a prime enginery for religious self-deception; the patent process for building wood, hay, and stubble into the fabric of the visible church, instead of precious metals and stones. If our consciences would permit us to resort to these measures, we could burn over wide surfaces, as others do, leaving them, as they do, blighted and barren for all more scriptural methods. Thus this unhealthy system works against us, not only by sweeping the multitudes, by unsound means, into these other communions, but by searing and hardening what is left, so as to unfit them for our sober but safer methods.

These are the differences which account, so far as merely natural means are concerned, for the greater facility with which these denominations gain popular accessions. It may be said that, in urging these points, we are guilty of making "odious comparisons," and of insinuating, at least, disparagement of sister churches. If our reasonings on these points are untrue, then we are thus guilty. But if we are correct, then loyalty to truth requires us, in studying the comparison of results to which we are challenged, to state the true solutions. But we state them in no spirit of arrogance or insolence towards others; for we accompany these points with deep and sorrowful confessions of the imperfections of our own household. The nominal membership of all the churches, including our own, is, doubtless, deplorably mixed. Witness the prevalent worldly conformities; the incursions of dissipating amusements; the decline of family religion and discipline; the Sabbath-breaking by communicants, and even ministers; the loose and unscrupulous methods of "making money;" the indifference of multitudes to the obligations of old debts; the practical prayerlessness of countless families and individuals. The correct inferences to draw from all these corruptions are: that any conclusions whatever from these hollow numbers, as to the methods of a real and spiritual effici-

ency in God's work, are mainly out of place, and untrustworthy; that the number of counterfeit coins among our supposed gains are too large to leave much place for prudent counting up; that the church of Christ at this time is called to study *genuineness* much more than numerical increase.

If the question be raised, why the church does not grow faster? we are persuaded that the real answer, which most needs looking at, is the one which our author dismisses most hastily: that the fault is not ecclesiastical, but spiritual. The real *desideratum* is not new methods, but fidelity to the old, a true revival in the hearts of ministers and Christians themselves, a faith that "feels the power of the world to come," a solemn and deep love for souls. What we most need is repentance, and not innovation.

We are persuaded, however, that the Southern Presbyterian Church is contributing to the general advancement of Christ's cause, along with sister denominations, in ways of her own, which are not to be measured by numerical results; and it is not arrogance, but truth, to view these contributions. In the natural "body there are many members, yet one body, but all the members have not the same office;" and it is so in the ecclesiastical body of the visible church-catholic. Presbyterianism is providentially fashioned and employed to do for Christendom her own peculiar part. It is the conservative branch of the family of churches, checking the departures of all the others from sound doctrine. It is the exemplar of scriptural organization. It is the sustainer of the more thorough education of both ministry and laity. And we assert that, constituted as poor human nature now is, it is entirely reasonable to expect that Presbyterianism cannot, in the nature of the case, both perform all these her peculiar precious functions, and also compete successfully for the largest and most promiscuous numbers. The two results may be now incompatibles. And hence it may be justifiable that Presbyterianism should make the practical election, and pursue these vital results which are peculiarly assigned to her in providence, though at the cost of resigning the more promiscuous numerical greatness. The normal school cannot have as many pupils as the popular school; to do so it must cease to be normal.

The issue raised, then, is this: whether it is not now our duty to give up our constitutional requirement of a classically learned

ministry, and provide another grade of ministers, equipped only with piety, zeal, and an English training, in order to gain these numerical accessions, like our Immersionist and Methodist neighbors. It is not proposed that we shall lower the standard of learning in our Seminaries, or discourage such as have taste for it from acquiring classical training; but that there shall be another wide door into our ministry, by which a large number of ministers of another grade shall be permitted to enter, with only an English education. On the other hand, we hold that our present theory of preparation should be left unchanged, and only more faithfully executed. The extent of this is, not to make classical learning so essential to the being of a ministry as to refuse the character of a valid minister to those who are without our training, but to assert that *it is a true source of increased efficiency*; and hence, inasmuch as every one who avouches the obligation to serve Christ ought to feel obliged to serve him the most and the best possible, we conclude it to be our duty to gain that increase of capacity for service.

The first reason we urge against innovation is, that it opposes the deliberate judgment of the wisest and best of our fathers, when viewing and deciding the very same problem. Is it said that the tremendous emergency arising out of our growth of population has put a new face on the question, in the presence of which they would have decided otherwise? No. Dr. John H. Rice, for instance, foresaw precisely this increase and this emergency. He looked full in the face the figures disclosing the slow relative growth of Virginia Presbyteries. And in the presence of these express facts this is what he did in 1825: he devoted his great powers to pressing these two points, the evils of an uneducated ministry, and the equipment of Union Seminary. Never, for one moment, did the facts sway him and his co-workers to favor the hurrying of a single partially educated man into the field; their only idea of the remedy was, to provide means as speedily as possible to give the most thorough education to the largest number of ministers. The same thing was true of the fathers who began the creation of Princeton Seminary in 1811, Ashbel Green, Archibald Alexander, Samuel Miller, and their comrades. The same was true also of Moses Stuart in New England, and the men who created the Congregational (American) Education Society. They saw the solemn

emergency ; they appreciated the church's slow progress in overtaking it ; they refused all other remedy for it than the one to which they devoted their energies ; means for the thorough education of more numerous men to reap the perishing harvest.

But it is suggested that there is substantial difference in the case now, because we now have a rich and profuse literature in English, covering all the departments of theological learning, whereas, when the Presbyterian constitution was first devised (say 1649-1651), all was locked up in Latin. We are told that, even at the day of Albert Barnes, he had nothing in English to begin with, save Doddridge's Family Expositor.

This greatly misrepresents the facts. We must remind readers, first, that the dates of the creation of our constitution, as an American church, are not those of the Westminster Assembly, but are 1729, 1758, 1789, and especially 1820. At the last date, which marks the real establishment of our polity, the English works on all the branches of divinity bore as large a ratio to the Latin then accessible to American scholars, both in quantity and value, as at this day. To make it much otherwise, indeed, at the epoch of the Westminster Assembly, one must strangely forget the works of the great English Reformers a century before, from Crammer onward, many of which were in English. He must forget that the age of the Westminster Assembly was adorned by such writers as Lightfoot, Richard Baxter, Manton, John Owen, the prince of expositors, Joseph Caryl, Sir Robert Boyle, Bishop Hall, Matthew Poole, the Scotchmen Baillie, Henderson, and Rutherford, the evangelical prelates Usher and Leighton, the poet and divine John Milton, and a multitude of others. These men illustrated every part of biblical learning by works which, to this day, are mines of knowledge for the more pretentious moderns, and that, not only in Latin dress, as Poole's "*Synopsis Criticorum*," but also in English, as the same author's "Annotations."

Now, when we add to this noble catalogue of English biblical lore of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the yet more profuse works of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth, how much is the trivial assertion of Barnes worth ? Not to dwell on the profound works of the scholars of the Anglican Church, such as Dean Prideaux, Bishops Hammond, Bull, Stillingfleet, Warburton, Waterland, Pearson, we remember that

age witnessed the critical labors of a Bentley and a Mill, the Hebrew Grammars (in English) of Bayley, Fitzgerald, Joseph Frey; the Lexicons of Parkhurst and Frey, the publication of Dr. George Campbell's Gospels, the vast and unsurpassed work of Dr. Lardner (*Credibility*), the prophetic studies of Sir Isaac Newton and of Bishop Newton and Dr. Faber; ministers had possessed Doddridge from 1740; McKnight from 1756; Dr. Benson from 1735; Paley's *Horae Paulinae* from 1790; Blair on the Canon from 1785; Lowth's critical works from 1787; Whitby from 1761; Dr. Gill from 1763, unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, by any commentator since, who wrote on the whole Bible; Matthew Henry from 1706; Scott from 1790; not to dwell on the long line of American divines from Drs. John Cotton and Cotton Mather down to Jonathan Edwards. No, the framers of our constitution did not require learning of their ministry because the stores of information were then locked up in Latin, but because they knew that knowledge of the originals of the Bible was essential to make a competent teacher in the church. Nor are the English books of this age on divinity more learned, or accurate, or useful, than the former; they are more frequently feeble rehashes of the very materials already gathered by those admirable old scholars.

We have, then, the battle to fight over again for the utility of thorough education, and a knowledge of the "dead languages," to the pastor. Let us again define the ground we assume. It is not that the Christian ignorant of the classics may not get the rudiments of redemption out of English books, or may not so teach them to another as to save his soul. It is not that this plain man's ministry is invalid, because he is no classic. It is not that such a man, if greatly gifted by nature and grace, may not do more good than many weaker good men with their classical training. But we assert that this training will be, to any man, gifted above his fellows or not, an important *means of still greater efficiency, correctness, authority, and wisdom*, in saving souls, and that the lack of it will entail on any pastor a considerable (comparative) liability to partial error, mistakes, and injury of the church and of souls. Now it is each minister's duty to love God, not with a part, but with all of his heart; and to serve him, not only as well as some weaker brother is doing, but with the fullest effectiveness possible for him, he being such

a man and in such circumstance as he is. It should be with each minister as with the faithful and devoted bondsman. He may be gifted by nature with a giant frame, so that with a dull and inferior axe he cuts more wood for the master in the day than another with his natural feebleness who has the keenest axe. By "putting to more strength," he may even cut the average day's task. But if, by grinding his axe thoroughly, he is enabled to cut even two days' task in one, if he loves the master he will grind it. And even if his day is advanced towards the middle of the forenoon, if he finds that an hour devoted even then to a thorough grinding, will result in a larger heap of wood well cut by nightfall, he will stop at that late hour to grind.

Now, as to the high utility of classic culture to the educated man, the arguments which have convinced the majority of well-informed men for three centuries, have by no means been refuted by the multiplication of books in English. Latin and Greek are large sources of our mother tongue. No man has full mastery of it until he knows the sources. Translation from language to language is the prime means for training men to discrimination in using words, and thus, in thought. There is no discipline in practical logic so suitable for a pupil as those reasonings from principles of syntax, by processes of logical exclusion and synthesis, to the correct way of construing sentences. As a mental discipline, this construing of a language, other than our vernacular, has no rival and no substitute in any other study. And if the language to be construed is idiomatically different from the vernacular, with its own genius, collocating thoughts and words in its own peculiar order, as is the case with the "dead languages," this fits them best of all to be implements of this discipline. It is the best way for teaching the young mind to think. We do not dwell on the culture of true taste, and the value of the fine models presented in the classics. It may be retorted that there is fine writing in English too; why may not this cultivate the taste? We reply; these English models are moulded after the classic, if they are really fine. Is it not better to take our inspiration from the prime source than the secondary? Moreover, they are usually so imbued with classic allusion and imagery that only a classic scholar can understand them. True, Milton wrote in English; but the reader needs to

be as much a Latin and Greek scholar fully to comprehend him as to read Virgil and Sophocles.

But the prime fact which determines the question is, that the Bible was given by God in Greek and Hebrew. The Greek New Testament and Hebrew Old Testament alone are God's word. No translation or commentary is infallible. No man who must needs "pin his faith" as to the interpretation of a given phrase upon the "say so" of an expositor that "this is just what the Greek means," can be always certain that he is not deceived. Does one say, this is all the laity have? Just so; and therefore no such layman is entitled to become the authorized teacher of others. "The analogy of the faith" may give the intelligent English reader practically a certainty that his translators and expositors do give him the more fundamental and obvious truths of redemption without any substantial error, and that he may be sure of his own salvation. But it ought to be the aim of the religious teacher, who undertakes to lead others, to attain accuracy also on the lesser points. No atom of revealed truth is useless to souls. The lesser error may perchance be the means of leading some soul to the greater, even to the destructive, mistake. The duty of the pastor to go himself to the fountain head of the exposition may be illustrated thus: an author offers to him his English commentary on Scripture designed for the English reader. The pastor receives it and says, "That is well. But, Mr. Expositor, you yourself tested your own expositions by the light of the original Greek?" "No," he answers, "writing only for English readers, I myself stopped at the English version!" That pastor would throw the commentary from him with indignation. But the pastor is the commentary of his charge; they have the same right to require of him that he shall not stop short of testing his expositions to them until he gets to the infallible standard.

Again, it is often the pastor's duty to defend the correct exposition of the truth against impugnors. How can he do this successfully unless he is able to argue for the translation he assumes, when he is always liable to be assailed with the assertion: "I deny that the original means what you say." Shall he meet assertion only with bald assertion, while confessing that he himself is not qualified to judge whereof he affirms? This would be a sorry polemic indeed. For instance, the pastor

ignorant of Greek has declared that the word rendered in the Scripture "*justify*," does not signify an inward and spiritual change, but only a forensic and declarative act of God in favor of the believing sinner. The Roman priest rises and says: "Holy Mother Church teaches the opposite; how do you know what the word signifies?" "I read what I asserted in Dr. Hodge's English Commentary on Romans. He says so." "But Holy Mother Church is inspired. Is your Dr. Hodge inspired?" "No." "Do you know Greek, so as to assure us, yourself, that he may not be mistaken?" "No." "But," the priest adds, "the church is not only infallible, but knows Greek perfectly; and she asserts, of her knowledge, that you and your Dr. Hodge are mistaken." In what a pitiful attitude is this "defender of the faith" left, although he is, in fact, on the right side, with nothing but an assertion and a confession of ignorance to offset a more confident assertion.

It is worth remarking also, that an incomplete knowledge of the original languages is not to be despised in the pastor. A tolerable knowledge of the rudiments, which would not suffice him to originate independent criticism, may enable him to judge intelligently of another's criticism of the original. Or it may furnish him with the weapons to overthrow completely the arrogant assailant who knows no more than he does and yet boasts much. A young pastor in Virginia was once debating, during a series of days, the "Thomasite" creed with its founder, a man of boundless dogmatism and pretension. He, like the Anabaptists of Luther's age, denied the conscious existence of the soul apart from the body after death. He boldly asserted that he knew Hebrew; that the Hebrew Scripture gave no countenance to the idea of separate spirit in man; for that the word currently translated soul in the English version meant only a *smelling bottle*! The young pastor related that when Dr. Thomas began to parade his Hebrew he began to tremble, for he had the guilty consciousness that the dust had been gathering on his own Hebrew books ever since he left the Seminary. But the intervening night gave him an opportunity to examine them, and his Lexicon at once cleared up the source of the impudent assertion, by giving him under נֶפֶשׁ ("breath," "soul") the phrase from Isaiah iii. 20: בִּתְּי נֶפֶשׁ "smelling bottle" (bottles of odors). All, therefore, that was necessary was to take this Lexicon to

the church next morning, read the extract, challenge all competent persons—of whom there happened to be none present—to inspect his citation, and show the absurdity of reading “smelling bottle” wherever שֶׁנִּשְׁמַט occurred. Thus, as he humorously stated, he hewed Dr. Thomas to pieces with his own smelling bottle. Here a small tincture of Hebrew answered a valuable purpose: without it, our advocate would have had nothing but assertion to oppose to assertion. It should also be admitted that a critical knowledge of the Hebrew tongue is less essential to the pastor than of the Greek, and its lack less blamable. For the New Testament résumés and restates all the doctrines of redemption contained in the Old Testament. Hence, he who can be sure that he construes all the declarations of the New Testament aright, cannot go amiss as to any of the doctrinal statements of the Old Testament, though he has only the English version. But even this admission cannot be extended to the historical statements of the Old Testament; and as they have an interesting, though subordinate, value for illustrating the plan of redemption, the minister who knows Greek but not Hebrew cannot be fully on the level of him who knows both. For, in general, there is a sense in which the best translation cannot fully represent its original. Pope’s Homer shows us Pope rather than Homer; Dryden’s Virgil, Dryden fully as much as Virgil. There are shades of thought, connections of words and ideas, idiomatic beauties and aptitudes of expression, which a mere translation does not reproduce. These points, lost in any modern version, are not essential to the getting of the fundamentals of redemption; but they clothe the teachings of revelation in a light and consistency which he that undertakes to teach others ought not to slight.

There is a practical testimony to this argument. It is found in the example of some of the best of those excellent and useful men who have found themselves in the Baptist or Methodist ministry without classical knowledge. They, seeing its vital necessity to the guide of souls, have given themselves no rest until they have acquired, often by unassisted study, a competent knowledge of the New Testament Greek at least; many also of the Hebrew. Their consciences would not suffer them to remain without it.

This position is also sustained by this very simple and natural

view. 1 Timothy iii. 2, requires of the presbyter-bishop "aptness to teach." This cannot mean less than didactic ability to explain the gospel correctly; and we may grant that this would be sufficiently conferred by fair general intelligence, perspicuous good sense, the gift of utterance, familiarity with the Scriptures of the New Testament, and a personal experience of gospel grace. The intelligent tradesman or mechanic in Ephesus might possess these. But ought not the modern pastor to possess this *minimum* qualification? Should he not be abreast, at least, of the Ephesian mechanic? Let it be remembered that this Greek, now the classic "dead" language, was then the vernacular. The educated Englishman must be no mean Greek scholar to have that practical mastery of the idiom which this mechanic had, granting that the mechanic had not the knowledge of the elegancies of Greek which the modern student may have sought out. But more than this: the events, the history, the geography, the usages, the modes of thought, the opinions, which constituted the human environment of the New Testament writers, the accurate understanding of which is so necessary to grasp the real scope of what they wrote, all these were the familiar, popular, contemporaneous knowledge of that intelligent mechanic in Ephesus. He had imbibed it in his daily observation, reading, and talk, as easily and naturally as the mechanic in Charleston has imbibed the daily facts about current politics, cotton shipments, familiar modern machinery, or domestic usages. But to us now all this expository knowledge is archæologic! It is gained accurately only by learned researches into antiquity. This imaginary picture may help to put us in the point of view for understanding our argument. We may suppose that the chasm of eighteen centuries is crossed, so that an Ephesine scholar—not mere mechanic—appears in Charleston now, and it is made his duty to instruct his Greek fellow-colonists in the municipal and state laws. But they are printed in English, a tongue strange to him, antipodal to Greek in idiom. Well, this difficulty may be surmounted by learning English, or, as our opponents think, simply by purchasing a translation of South Carolina laws into Greek; though how this translation is to enable him to *guarantee* his clients against error in their legal steps passes our wit to see. But this obstruction out of the way, he begins to read. He finds enactments about property in "cot-

ton"! What is cotton? The wool which old Herodotus reported grew on trees in Nubia? And property in steam engines! And in steamships! And in steam cotton-compress engines; and in stocks of railroads, and in banks, and in government securities! And of buying and selling cotton futures! And of valuable phosphate works, etc., etc. What a crowd of surprises, of mysteries, of astonishments! How much to be learned, after the knotty, sibilant, guttural English is learned, before the book has any light to his mind!

We thus see that the plain Ephesine mechanic elder had immense advantages over us, inuring directly from his epoch, contemporary with the events of redemption, from his vernacular, from his providential position for understanding the sacred books. But we again urge the question, Are we "apt to teach," unless we make up our deficiencies to a level somewhere near his? The modern who has become a learned Greek scholar and archæologist has not done more than reach the level of this Ephesine elder. It were well for us if we had reached it.

Only one other point in this wide field of argument can be touched. The great apostasy of prelacy and popery was wrought precisely on that plan of a partially educated ministry which is now urged on us. As time rolled on, antiquating the language and the facts and opinions of the apostolic age, the church forgot the argument illustrated above, and vainly fancied that she would find the requisite "aptness to teach," as Timothy found it, in pious men taken from the mass of society. Men read church history now under an illusion. When they hear of the pastors and fathers of the early church as writing and preaching in Latin or Greek, because these are the learned languages now, these must have been learned men! But it was not so; these languages were their vernaculars. True learning was not the requisite for the ministerial office in the patristic ages. A few, like Jerome, had biblical learning; the most were chosen without it, precisely on the plan now recommended to us. The Latin pastor knew no Greek nor Hebrew, but read his Bible from a translation, precisely as our author wishes his new evangelist to do now. The Greek pastor knew no Latin nor Hebrew. The result of that experiment is indelibly written in church history. the result was the gradual development of popery; the "dark ages;" the reintroduction of idolatry; the mass, bloody per-

secutions, and the corruption of Christianity. This lesson is enough for us ; we do not desire to witness the repetition of the experiment. It was by just such expositions, founded on a translation, for instance, that the great Augustine, ignorant of Hebrew, and nearly ignorant of Greek, but energetic, eloquent, and confident, introduced into the theology of the Latin church those definitions which it took all the throes and labors of the Reformation to expunge ; which made *μετάνοια* mean penance (*penitentie*) ; *ἐπιστροφή* mean conversion, and faith (*fides*) a derivative of the verb *ῥή*, "it is done," thus representing faith as a work. Shall we be told that Protestants have now learned that lesson so well that there will be no danger of their being again misled on those points, even by uneducated guides ? Perhaps not on those points. But who can foresee on what other unexpected points ? The ingenuity of error is abounding.

Reference is made to a literary revolution which is to extrude the study of the classics from their place, and substitute other (modern) languages for them, or modern sciences ; and it is claimed that this revolution has gone so far, and is so irrevocable, that in making the classics a requisite for preaching we narrow our field of choice to one-fifth of the fully educated young men of the country. We see no evidences of such a revolution as permanent. We see, indeed, a plenty of rash innovation ; but there is no sign that the educated mind of Christendom will submit to such a change in the methods of liberal culture. The business school is relied on, indeed, to make architects, engineers, and clerks ; but real education, in its higher sense, still resorts to the classics as the foundation. Germany, for instance, "the school-mistress of the nations," has her "*real-schulen*" for the training of the men who are expected to devote themselves to the "bread and butter sciences ;" but her *gymnasien*, where her youth are prepared for the professions, hold fast to the most thorough teaching of the dead languages. The plea that we limit ourselves away from four-fifths of our young men by requiring classical training, is refuted by this simple view. The educated, in any mode or form, are a small fraction of any population. Suppose, now, we retort, that by requiring that sound English education in divinity, which is described to us as so desirable and sufficient, we preclude ourselves from the whole field of choice, except that small fraction ;

wherefore we should require no education, classical nor English, but ordain the common mass-ignorance. The reply to this our sophism would be patent: that while the church will not ordain ignorance, she does not preclude even the most ignorant, because she proposes to educate (in English) and then ordain all worthy applicants. But if classical training is essential to the minister's best usefulness, as we have shown, the very same reply avails for us. The church does not exclude the four-fifths of the cultivated English scholars, by requiring of all classical knowledge; because her call is to come forward and accept a classical education, and then be ordained. The man who is fit for a minister will not refuse the additional labor for Christ, when he learns that it is requisite for his more efficient service of Christ. But it is said, the man whose heart God hath touched, may have no Latin, and may be middle-aged, and may have, moreover, a family on his hands. The classical process is too long for him to attempt. To this the answers are two. Very few men at middle age ought to be encouraged to take up the clerical profession. They must be men of peculiarly good endowments of nature and grace, or both they and the church will have to repent the unseasonable change of profession. And second, for those peculiar cases our system already makes full provision. To any fit man's plea, that the preparation required of him by the church is hopelessly long, she has this answer: no such man, however behindhand in his training, ever fails to receive, among us, the aid and encouragement to carry him through the desirable training. Her answer is, to point to that noble and honored class of her ministers represented by the planter, James Turner of Bedford; the ex-carpenter, Dr. J. D. Matthews; the ex-ship captain, Dr. Harding; and to say to all like-minded men, if Christ gives you the *will*, we pledge ourselves to give the *way*.

It is urged that, by our requirements, we actually limit God's sovereignty. He may have elected the devout man without Latin, while we practically refuse to have him. That this is a "begging of the question," appears from one remark: suppose it should be that God's election and call are to a thorough education, and then to preaching. But whether this is God's purpose is the very question in debate. To assume the negative is to beg that question. Should the affirmative be true, then

our requirements are not across, but in the very line of God's purpose.

We are pointed to the inconsistent execution of our system, to the perfunctory examinations of Presbyteries, the shameful ignorance of some candidates, the practical setting at naught of our own constitution; and we are told that we have just enough of the old system, in name, to drive off from us the good men who make no pretence of classical knowledge, and yet not enough to keep out other men as ignorant, and less honest. Now, on this we remark, first, that this charge is not brought by us, but by others; and it is not our mission at this time to affirm it. But, secondly, if it be true, the inference drawn from it, that our slow growth and small success mainly are caused by a lack of this class of less educated ministers, will find its complete refutation in the facts charged. For surely no other solution of our scanty success need be sought, if those discreditable facts are true. If courts of Christ's church thus trample on their own profession and their own rules; if they thus dishonestly certificate ignorance as scholarship, assisting such impositions on society; if the young men who become our pastors have no more conscience than to contemn and waste the precious opportunities for learning provided them by the church, so as to come forth from them pretentious dunces; if such grovelling laziness in the season of preparation is the measure of these young men's energy and devotion in their ministry, *there is* a mass of sin at once abundantly sufficient to insult our God, grieve his Spirit, and effectually alienate his help. Our quest is ended. There is no need for our looking one step farther to find out what is the matter. Such a ministry cannot be blessed of a truthful God, and cannot succeed. The one work which remains for us is, not to change our constitution, but, with deep repentance and loathing delinquencies so shameful, to return to it, and live up to it. Let us try that first. If these charges are true—which it is no task of ours to affirm—let us execute our righteous rules in examining and licensing in such a way that God's truth shall be honored, real merit recognized, and dishonest indolence shamed and banished from among us. Then, perhaps, we shall find that our ministry will be efficient, without innovating on the wisdom of our laws, approved by the experience of centuries.

It is argued that since society includes various grades of taste, culture, and possessions, our church is suffering for the lack of different grades of ministers. But we thought that the *parity of the ministry* was one of the corner-stones of our constitution. Methodists, or prelatists, can consistently have different grades : for they retain some features of hierarchy. Our church, in its very essence, is not a hierarchy, but a republic. Now, there is one sense in which, with an equally thorough education, we shall have, not grades, but sorts of ministers endlessly various, and adapted to all the various parts of our work. No two minds are exactly alike ; no two temperaments. God, who bestows the different shades of nature, provides for this variety ; that is enough. All we need is to do as our author so well inculcates in his January number—allot the right man to the right work by our Presbyterian supervision. This is entirely compatible with parity. “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.” But when we begin to make a substantive difference in the educational privileges of ministers, to train them for different grades, these will soon be virtually marked as higher and lower grades. Ultimately, the forms will be moulded to the virtual facts, and we shall have, like the Methodists, the beginnings of a hierarchy. And whereas it is supposed that the more cheaply trained preachers will be specially adapted to the plainer and poorer congregations, our knowledge of Presbyterian human nature makes us surmise that these will be the very charges to insist most upon having the fully trained minister, and to resent the allotment of the less learned to them as a stigma and a disparagement. It is much to be feared that the new grade will be obstinately rejected by the very grade of hearers for whom they will have been devised.

The *desideratum* claimed is, that there shall be a way, like the Methodist mode, for giving many ministers their adequate training without the expense and delay of segregating them for years in scholastic institutions, along with a useful occupation in parochial labors. Now, we are struck with the thought that our constitution provides expressly for just this way. It nowhere makes a college or a seminary an essential. All that it stipulates for, in the way of means, is a two years’ training under “some approved divine.” This, of course, throws the door wide open to the incoming of the very ideal painted. The young man may

join any experienced pastor, assist him within or without his field of labor, pursue his studies under his guidance, in connection with these evangelistic labors, present himself before Presbytery, and, if his "parts of trial" are adequate, demand his licensure with the full sanction of the present constitution. Now, if such a mode of training is so desirable, is so strongly a "felt want," how comes it that none enter into this open door? Why has there been such a rarity of such cases in our church since 1825? Why are not many learned and wise pastors—of whom we have so many—thus bringing on many godly candidates? The obvious reply is, that the good sense of the church tacitly preceives this training unsuited to the times. Pastors practically feel this, churches feel it, and the young men feel it. It is the same feeling which is to-day operating in the Methodist Church to make them substitute this method of training, long so peculiarly their own, by one more nearly like ours. In a word, the door is already open. If the Christian community felt its need of this way, it would use it. It does not use it; and the inference is that really it does not want it.

We have been told that by this way we should get a cheaper ministry for our new fields. Men thus trained, not having spent so much in their training, would work on smaller salaries. Now, the only experience we have does not support this hope. Most of the Methodist evangelists were trained thus; but they really receive better salaries than the Presbyterian. When the various allowances are added up, theirs is found a better paid ministry than ours.

The urgent comparisons made between our method and that of Methodists and Baptists cannot but suggest another thought: that we, if we make the proposed change, shall be in danger of "putting on their old shoes just when they are throwing them away." If these denominations are good exemplars for us, then it is to be presumed that they understand their own interests; their fine results indicate wise management. Now, it is significant that both these denominations are now expending great effort in making certain changes in their methods of rearing ministers, and that these changes are in the direction of the way we are now advised to forsake. They have tried, and are trying, two different ways. They are in a transition state. Before we make their way our guide, it will be well to wait and see

which of their two ways they are going to approve finally for themselves. If we are correctly informed by those who are in closest intelligence with their influential men, these are yearly less and less satisfied with their old species of training, and more and more desirous to have all their ministry improve the advantages of the excellent seminaries of theology which they have founded. Hear, for instance, the testimony of Mr. Price in the *Southern Presbyterian* :

“And, in proof of this view, it is a remarkable fact, that those very causes to which this writer ascribes their more rapid growth, are becoming more unpopular every day with those denominations. While he and others in our church are advocating a lower standard of ministerial qualification, that we may keep pace with the Baptists and Methodists, these denominations are directing the most intelligent energies of their respective churches to raising their grade of scholarship ; their uneducated men are losing caste and influence ; the ministers coming forth from their theological schools are establishing a public sentiment and a more rigid rule of systematic theology, and of clear and accurate statement in doctrine, before which the loose and extravagant discourses of a class of preachers that once exercised a powerful influence fall under sharp censure, and are even occasionally exposed to ridicule.

“There are unlearned men in these churches, and such may be licensed and ordained in ours, under our provisions for extraordinary cases, whom the most intelligent are bound to respect as called of God, and whose usefulness none can deny ; but when our Baptist and Methodist brethren are casting off certain methods, which they have weighed in the balance and found wanting, it becomes us to consider well before we take up that which they throw away, especially when they are free to confess that our example, and the evident fruits of our more thorough training, have powerfully impelled them towards change.

“The writer in the *Review* has heard of the Cumberland Presbyterians. If he has been correctly informed, he will find that no branch of the Presbyterian Church has, in proportion to its numbers and resources, more colleges, universities, and theological schools. If he attends their General Assembly, he will be impressed by the distinct and painful line of demarcation between their learned and their unlearned men. And when he sees and hears some of the latter, though he may find much to admire in the vigor of their speech and the vigor of their labors, he will not wonder that, as a people, our Cumberland brethren are making, perhaps, more vigorous efforts than any other Presbyterian body to educate their ministry, and thus obliterate one of the distinctive features upon which they went out from us. When the Rev. Dr. Lyon brought into our General Assembly, some years ago, a report against certain proposals of union with the Cumberland Presbyterians, he did not hesitate to present, as one of the arguments of the committee that he represented, that, by such a union, our church will be brought under the control of an overwhelming majority of uneducated men. If some of the theories now in vogue among us are put into practice, we may reach this alternative without uniting with the Cumberlands ; and they, in turn, by raising their standard, as they now seem determined to do, may be in a position, by and by, to raise the same objection to a union with us.

We are reminded that our system now requires a longer and more expensive preparation than the other liberal professions. And why should it not, when our professional tasks are infinitely more responsible? But facts here argue on our side again, in that society is steadily demanding a raised standard of preparation from lawyers and physicians. Is this the time to lower ours? The well-furnished young physician, for instance, gets, in his youth, a pretty fair classical education; then he reads medicine a year with some doctor; then, if he graduates in one year (most have to spend two) in a good school of theoretic medicine, like that in the University of Virginia, he does remarkably well; then he goes into a New York or Baltimore hospital one or two years, to get the clinic instruction. And even the plainer country neighborhoods are now requiring so much of training of their doctors! The other professions are advancing largely; it is no time for ours to go back.

It has been often and justly remarked that it requires more mature training and ability to teach unenlightened minds accurately than cultivated ones. It was considered by discerning persons the crowning manifestation of Dr. John H. Rice's trained capacity, that he could not only preach to the edification of General Assemblies in Philadelphia, but could go then to the Bethel Seamen's chapel and preach with equal effect to the rough sailors. If we are to bring poor and rude communities into our denomination, then they will need the best trained, not the inferior, minds, to inculcate on them our logical and profound system. And as regards the frontier communities, there is no greater mistake than that of concluding that, because their exteriors are rough, the ill-furnished minister will suffice to instruct them. The testimony of Dr. N. L. Rice, for instance, in the Assembly of 1857, was wholly the opposite; and he spoke of his own knowledge. Said he: "The garb of the frontiersmen may be rough; their dwellings may be cabins; but they include the most independent, active, inquiring minds anywhere to be found in America. It is the fact that their minds and temperaments are such which has made them emigrants; the plodding, the slow, the minds that like to lean on precedent and prescription, and are content to be led—these stay in the old neighborhoods. It is the adventurous minds who seek new fortunes. A very large portion of them are men of thorough

education. The educated emigrant is most often a 'free-thinker,' so-called; for one main impulse which pushes the man of culture to brave the roughnesses of the frontier is, that he has broken all intellectual trammels, if not all sound restraints of orthodox thinking. Hence we find these frontier societies seething with most eager speculation, questioning all old foundations. To suppose that the good man of slim intellectual resources can control these minds is the most fatal mistake. The man who is to command them needs to have the most mature resources of learning at the readiest possible command. He needs to be a walking library, of the most advanced learning, not only in divinity, but in all connected studies." This witness is also true of our Southern frontiers. You shall see the "cow-boy" of Western Texas, sometimes reclining on his greasy blanket to read a pocket edition of Horace or Moliere. In their "shanties," alongside of the whiskey-jug, will be found the writings of Huxley, Braddaugh, and Büchner, with the *Westminster Review*, and the works of Renan. Our evangelists confirm Dr. Rice's testimony, and tell us to send none but thoroughly furnished men to the frontiers.

It has been supposed that great gain would result from the alternative of an "English course" in our seminaries for such candidates for the ministry as could not find time or means for mastering the original languages of Scripture. A manual of church history might be taught, it is supposed, without involving Latin or Greek; and the exegetical and doctrinal studies would be founded on the English version alone. Were the teachers in these seminaries entitled to any consideration in this discussion, their friends might perhaps raise an embarrassing question on their behalf. Their time seems to be already fully occupied in the teaching of the fuller course to their classical students and the exposition of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, which alone are the *ipsissima verba* of God. Shall they cease to give this course, in order to do justice to the other class of their students? Or shall they give the latter class a light, perfunctory, Sabbath-school course, such as they will have time for? Would such a little sketch be a worthy training for a Presbyterian minister?

It will behoove the advocates of this system to consider three consequences which are very distinctly involved in it.

One is, that it will admit the imperfect education of a great many more men than should be entitled, according to the new plan itself, to enter the ministry upon it. Men's over-haste, or indolence, or ill-considered zeal, or self-confidence, will prompt many of the candidates to plead that they also are poor enough, or old enough, or gifted enough, or married enough, to claim to enter through the English door, of whom the judgment of our innovators themselves would be, that they had no grounds for claiming that easier way. The pressure of churches and Presbyteries for more laborers to be speedily gotten will assuredly second their pleas. The result will be the general breaking down of our standard. The majority of our ministry will be the uneducated, the minority the educated, as it was in the other denominations in those old ways from which they are striving so hard to escape.

The second will be, that the students of the English course will be much at the mercy of the professor for their doctrinal and exegetical opinions. When the teacher gives his construction of the text, if the English pupils attempt to say that the English version, or the commentaries thereon, seem to sustain another meaning, he has only to reply: "I assure you, young gentlemen, that the original supports only my construction; and if you understood that language, you would see it to be so." That is, to those students, an end of debate. Or else they must learn to hold their teacher in suspicion and disesteem, as a man capable of imposing on their ignorance. There will be one caste of minds which will resent this mental domination, the self-sufficient and crotchety. The consequence will be, that to this class their teacher will be no guide; but this is the class to whom influential guidance will be most necessary. Now, we surmise that this sweeping power in the professors of our seminaries will not be very agreeable to that large class of our presbyters who cherish along with us a well-grounded jealousy of seminary dictation, and all other forms of centralization. It may be said, our present professors may all be trusted. But they cannot remain always. Unhappily, such things have been known in seminaries as heretical professors, and yet oftener as crotchety professors, fond of riding exegetical hobbies. Shall we arm these with this dangerous power of leading off the English students after their error?

The third consideration is, that if the new plan of training is to be carried on to any successful extent, we must reconcile our minds to become a "broad church." We must lose our doctrinal unity. Again, we advance the experimental evidence as the most solid. All the denominations which practice the methods of training ministers proposed become broad churches. The Immersionists are a broad church; we have ourselves heard Calvinism and Arminianism preached in it from the same pulpit. The Cumberland Presbyterian is a broad church. The Methodist is a broad church. As we remarked, the Wesleyan theology receives from Methodist ministers various interpretations, from moderate Calvinism down to Pelagianism. There are ministers and presiding elders who hold the perseverance of the saints, just as we do. The church of Alexander Campbell is a broad church; he himself declared that in it "all sorts of doctrine were preached by all sorts of men." In this we are not reproaching these denominations. We use the phrase "broad church" in no sense offensive to them, but as a ready and familiar phrase to describe a condition of things among them on which they congratulate themselves, namely, a tolerance in the ministry of the same body of different schools of theological opinion, within the scope of the fundamental doctrines of salvation. But we only point to the fact that it has been the conscientious fixed policy of us Presbyterians not to have these doctrinal diversities and contrarieties among our official teachers. We receive all shades of opinion, compatible with true repentance, to our communion; but we require the the voice of our official body to give one sound as to revealed theology.

Now, the experience cited above proves that if we are willing to lose this doctrinal harmony and unity, the chief glory of a church of Christ, we have only to imitate these other denominations in their method of training ministers. The explanation of the result is easy. Human minds are imperfect instruments of thought, and their opinions naturally tend to variety and diversity. Again, the religious world teems with competing clashing doctrines, each striving for recognition and pressing itself on others with its utmost ingenuity of argument. The proposed method of training, by reason of its comparative brevity and imperfection, must leave its pupils more pervious to the in-

jurious religious errors which obtrusively meet them. These different "grades" of preachers will not have the unifying bond with each other of a complete *esprit de corps*. The result will be doctrinal divergence; and our church must either submit to become a "broad" one, or be again rent by schism. We are aware that there is no patent infallible process, in fallible men's hands, for transmitting a doctrinal homogeneity from age to age. But the means which comes nearest, the only means of any tolerable efficiency is, under the grace and light of God's Spirit, the thorough education of ministers in an orthodox theology, and that by similar methods for all. Thus not only is the competent knowledge of the divine science acquired by all, and the practical skill in moral reasoning and exposition, which detect error and sophism in false doctrines, but all imbibe, so to speak, the Presbyterian and orthodox idiosyncrasy of mind. The doctrinal affinity in the correct creed is propagated through the whole body. Now, he who really doubts whether the Presbyterian theology is right, may also doubt whether it is proper to employ these influences for unifying and stereotyping men's belief in it. But those who, with us, are sure that our theology is right, will also feel that it is not only allowable, but our duty to wield those influences for making our theology permanent in our ministers' minds. It is the only human way to avoid the tendencies to "broad churchism."

In conclusion, we most emphatically affirm all the regrets expressed at our lack of a holy aggressiveness, and every ardent aspiration for a remedy. But this remedy is not to be found by innovation upon our system, but in the reformation of the persons who work the system. What we need is not a class of imperfectly educated ministers, but repentance, holy yearnings for souls, prayer, and more abounding labor by educated ministers; more family religion and true Christian training in households, which is, after all, the Presbyterian's main lever; more self-consecration in our laymen; and especially our employment of the "dead capital" now lying unused in our eldership. The elder need not be a "local preacher," after the pattern of the Methodist "local," but the intelligent elder ought to be something much better; active in spheres of work which the church needs much more than sermonizing or formal "preachments," viz., catechetical instruction, teaching the gospel from house to

house, oversight, social meetings, exhortations, Sabbath-schools. Do we feel a "crying need" in our out-lying destitutions for such work as this, and for laborers to do it more cheaply than the educated evangelist? This is precisely the work which intelligent ruling elders ought to do. All the elders in Scripture, ruling and teaching, were required to be "apt to teach." Our conception of the New Testament organization of the congregation would not *pull down* a part of the ministers to an uneducated level, but *lift up* all the elders, including the ruling elders, to the level of *official teachers*. Each congregation was governed *and taught*, not by a one-man power, a sort of local prelate, but by a board, a plurality of elders, all of whom were teachers, though not all of equal teaching authority, learning, or gifts. But, to ensure full intelligence and permanent orthodoxy, we should require the presiding elder in this board to have the full equipment of well attested theological learning. One such man, thoroughly furnished, presiding over the board, and regulating and harmonizing their joint instructions, would give a sufficient guarantee of soundness in the faith. The others under him, in their less authoritative teaching sphere, would safely fill in the details of the work. The ruling elder would not act as catechist as though he were an independent integer, but as a member of the board, under its direction, and especially under the direction of the president, who is fully trained and tried; even as he, in his public work as authoritative herald of salvation, does not act independently, but under the control of *his* presbyterial board, the Presbytery. Thus the didactic work of each congregation would assume a largeness, occupying several men's hands; while the thorough theological furniture of the one man at the head would guarantee doctrinal safety in the whole. Such was evidently the apostle's conception in the pastoral epistles

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